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"a fine example of how to do the job properly ... a cracking conversion ... easily one of the most successful licences to date" Sinclair User



Kevin Costner's likeness is the copyright of Paramount Pictures.

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USE THE LASERSIGHT

or the bulletproof vest, but watch out for

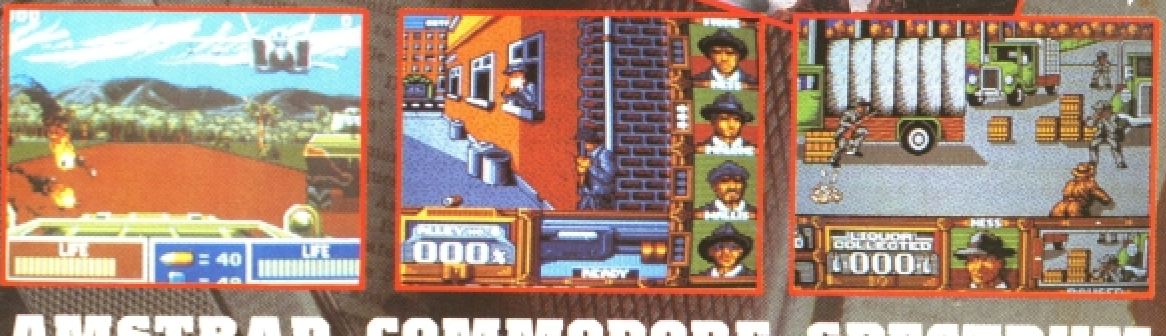
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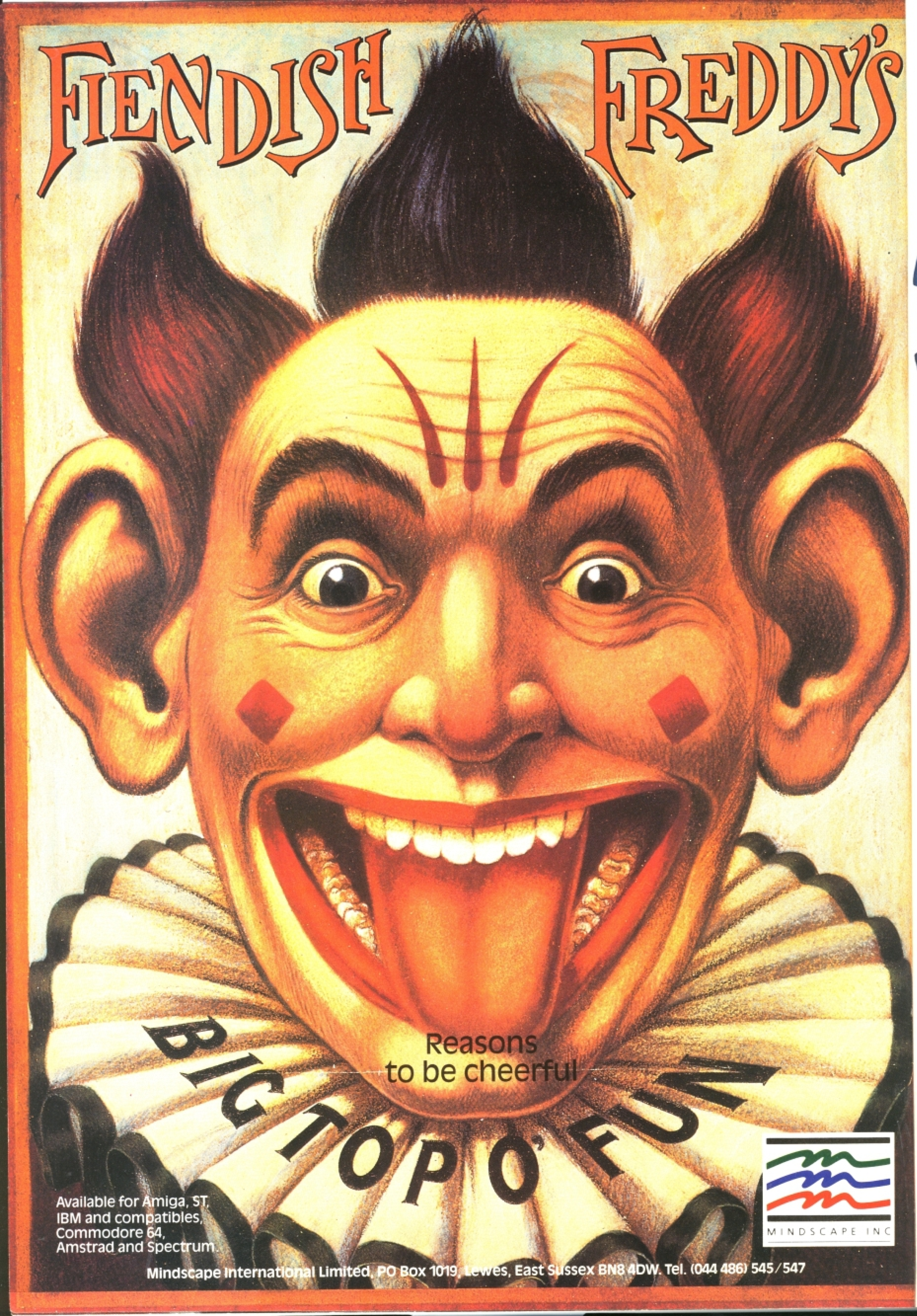
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ZERO 5



Man. Utd. going down on page 12



By no means a bleak Midwinter page 36



Vrroom, Vrroom page 20



Scoop this loot page 89



New dicks on the block page 99

GAMES LIST

Need a review or preview fast? Look it up in the ZERO quick reference index.

REVIEWS

PREVIEWS

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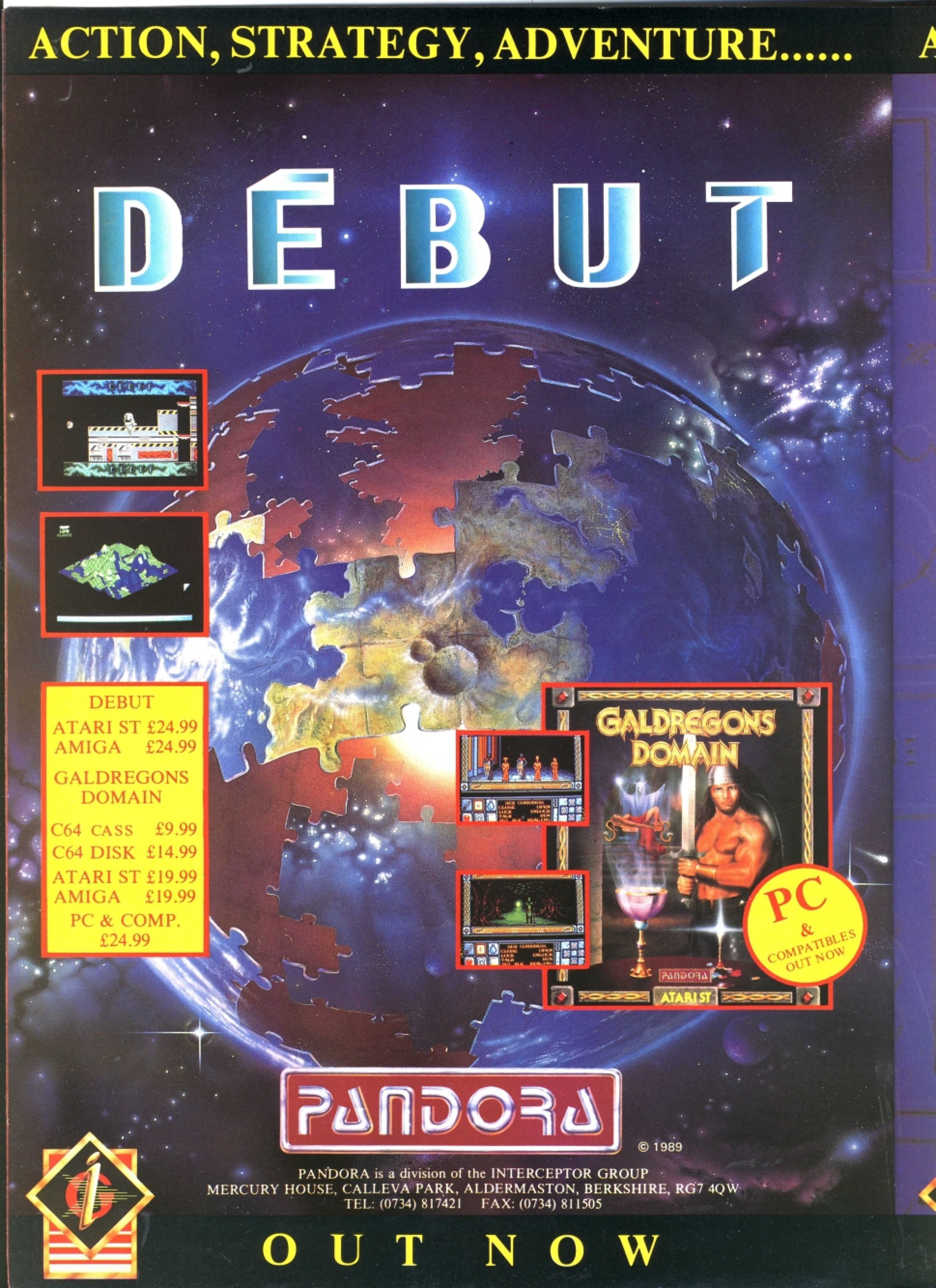
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ST CUTS

Thinking of buying an ST? It could be worth waiting a couple of months to see what Atari has up its sleeve. The company is being uncharacteristically cagey about its plans for 1990, but ZERO has an idea that there could be a price cut in the offing on the standard 520ST package – although you probably won't get your 20-odd games in the box as well. Still, a 520 ST at £299 or even £249 is not to be sniffed at.

Commodore's claim that it has now sold over 200,000 Amiga 500s in the UK has evidently rattled Atari, which has hit back by announcing there are 250,000 ST users in Britain. Over to Commodore again – any advance on that?



MICROPROSE MOVES STEALTHILY TO UK

The ST and Amiga versions of *F-19 Stealth Fighter* from Microprose have been delayed due to the American coding being binned and the project being restarted from scratch in the UK. As exclusively reported two months ago, Microprose has established a UK in-house programming team and *Stealth Fighter* will be its first project. Although no reasons have been given, it should be noted that a Microprose bod said of the new ST and Amiga team." The programmers over here are much better with these computers. We'll have... much better simulation software for them." Quite.

KICK OFF TOP OF THE LEAGUE

Anco's footie simulation *Kick Off* and US Gold's *Indiana Jones Adventure* walked off with the awards for best 16-bit arcade game and adventure game respectively at the industry's awards dinner at the end of last year.

The prize for the most original 16-bit game went to *Populous*, for which development team Bullfrog won the programming award.

Most of the categories are voted for by a selection of publishers, editors, distributors, etc, but Commodore also sponsors its own award for Entertainment With Vision (which generally seems to translate as 'best use of an Amiga,' won this year by *D-Paint III*.



***Batman:The Movie:* Best non arcade licence translation**

Other awards:

Best 16-bit budget game:
Super Grid Runner (Llamasoft)
Best 16-bit simulation:
Falcon (Mirrorsoft)
Best 16-bit arcade licence translation:
Operation Thunderbolt (Ocean)

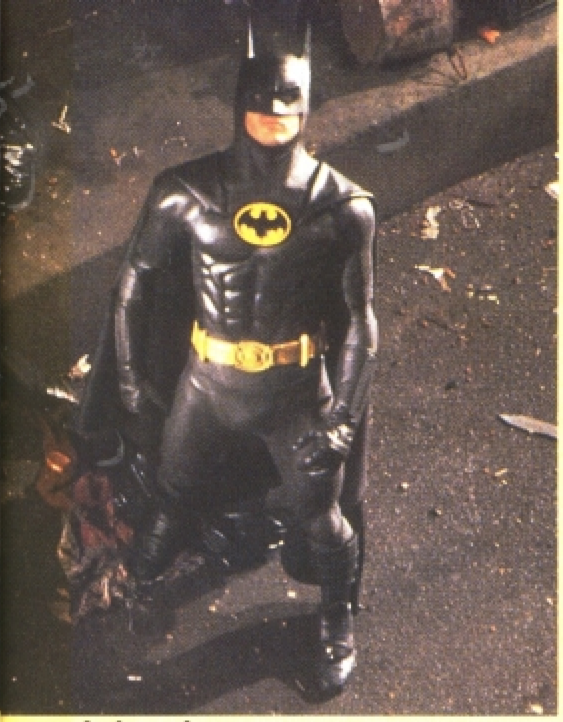


SOME CONSOLATION

Half a million 68000 computer owners is fair enough, but the consoles look set to catch up fast. Demand for the dedicated games machines is such that if the manufacturers won't officially release them in the UK, other companies are quite happy to bring them in unofficially – which is known as 'grey' importing.

So, what's in store? The new Nintendo colour Gameboy should be around on import from the spring and in addition to modified PC Engines, there's the PC Engine Super Graphx (see page 48) which has just been launched in Japan.

Virgin, which has exclusive UK rights to the Sega consoles, hopes to release the 16-bit Sega Megadrive this summer and of course Atari's handheld Lynx is also due for release. If you're very lucky indeed you may find a Lynx on sale in March or April, but Atari plans to have supplies in volume by the autumn.



translation winner.

Best 16-bit non-arcade licence translation:
Batman – The Movie (Ocean)
Best overseas game:
Future Wars (Delphine)
Best 16-bit sound and music:
Xenon II (Image Works)
Best 16-bit graphics:
Fiendish Freddy (Mindscape)
Best software house: ***Ocean***



Moonwalker – Presumably games like this aren't what US Gold has in mind for its new original software.

BOND IS BACK (YAWN)



There may not be a James Bond film released this year, but there'll still be a James Bond game. Domark, which holds the 007 computer games licence, only started putting Bond on the computer five years ago, so it has plenty of titles to catch up on.

This year's offering is *The Spy Who Loved Me*, one of Roger Moore's particularly impassive efforts on film, featuring Barbara Bach as The Girl. Domark's computer translation will offer a familiar mix of shooting, dodging and exploring. Due for release in July.

GO FOR GOLD

US Gold reckons it's time to take a new look at its 16-bit games policy. It wants to dig up titles which are that bit more sophisticated than your average arcade conversion, says the company's Danielle Woodyatt. "We're going more heavily into original games and 16-bit only titles. We think that people with16-bit machines want something they can get their teeth into – an arcade conversion may lack depth."

The first fruits of this decision should be out this spring and early summer, starting with *The Legend of Billy Boulder*, an American game with a cartoon-style theme and graphics to suit.

That's followed by *Sphericule*, being developed in the UK by The Assembly Line and *Knights Of The Crystallion*, an adventure style game for the Amiga.

MINT IMPERIUM

American publisher Electronic Arts is building up its catalogue of games originated in this country with the release of *Imperium*, a strategy game in which players must use their diplomatic, economic and military skills to stay alive in the 21st century.



This fetching couple on their way to a toga party are *Imperium* programmers Nick Wilson (left) and Matthew Stibbe (right). *Imperium* is Nick's first 16-bit game after some time spent converting 8-bit titles for Durell Software. Matthew has extensive experience of writing wargames for PSS. Gosh, I say.

Imperium is due for release in March on ST and Amiga.

PROBE DOES THE BIZ ON VIZ

Not rude enough! That was the verdict Virgin gave to Probe Software when it saw the company's initial storyboard for the game based on *Viz* comic.

Probe is now working on a no-holds-barred version of the game. This means that Johnny Fartpants, the Fat Slags, Roger Mellie et al won't be appearing on the computer now until late summer, along with Virgin's other big licence *Monty Python* and the new *Judge Dredd* game. So you'll just have to hold on until then (fnarr, fnarr).





ON THE GRAPEVINE

Expect the conversion of the coin-op **Midnight Resistance** some time around Easter from Ocean. It's being programmed by Special FX, responsible for the stunning **Untouchables** game, amongst other notables.

•Activision will be releasing the coin-op conversion **Sonic Boom** in the spring. We know nothing about it, so we asked them about it. "It's got aeroplanes and things, and you're flying over the sea... erm... that's it." We're sure it's going to be brilliant. Honest. One that looks totally fab at the moment is called **Warhead**, a massive space strategy game that the author Glyn WIlliams has been working on for eons. It's based on all sorts of realistic projections of what space hardware's going to be like in a century or so. Then they have a game called **Driftlands** due out, but erm... we know nothing about it.

•More sequels are on the cards. **Safari Guns II** is on the way from Infogrames and The Edge have promised us – wait for it – **Garfield III**. Can't wait. Then there's the ol' classic **Football Manager**, being given yet another new lease of life as **Football Manager: World Cup Edition**.

•Krysalis, not content with foisting Manchester United onto the unsuspecting public, plan to follow it up with a hockey game in a similar style. If that one sells, there'll be a rugby game...

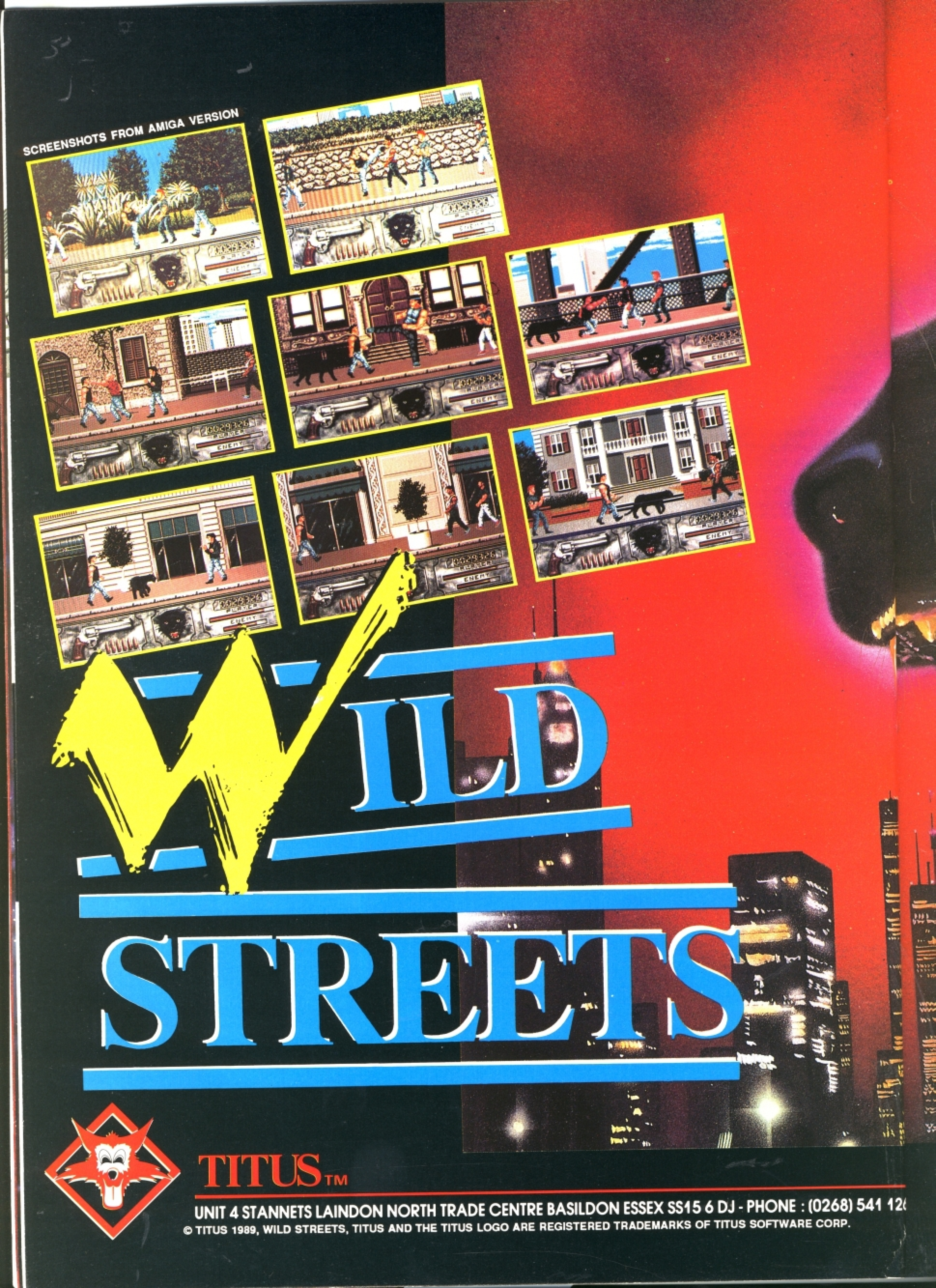
•Virgin will be releasing the 16-bit version of the arcade classic **Golden Axe** later in the year. Virgin have also announced a computer game based on the novella **Dune**. Being such a short and light tome, it could only emerge as a shoot 'em up of course. Not a strategy epic, that's for sure. Not content with that lot, there's **Silver Surfer**, although that might not be ready until (cough) 1991. Blimey.

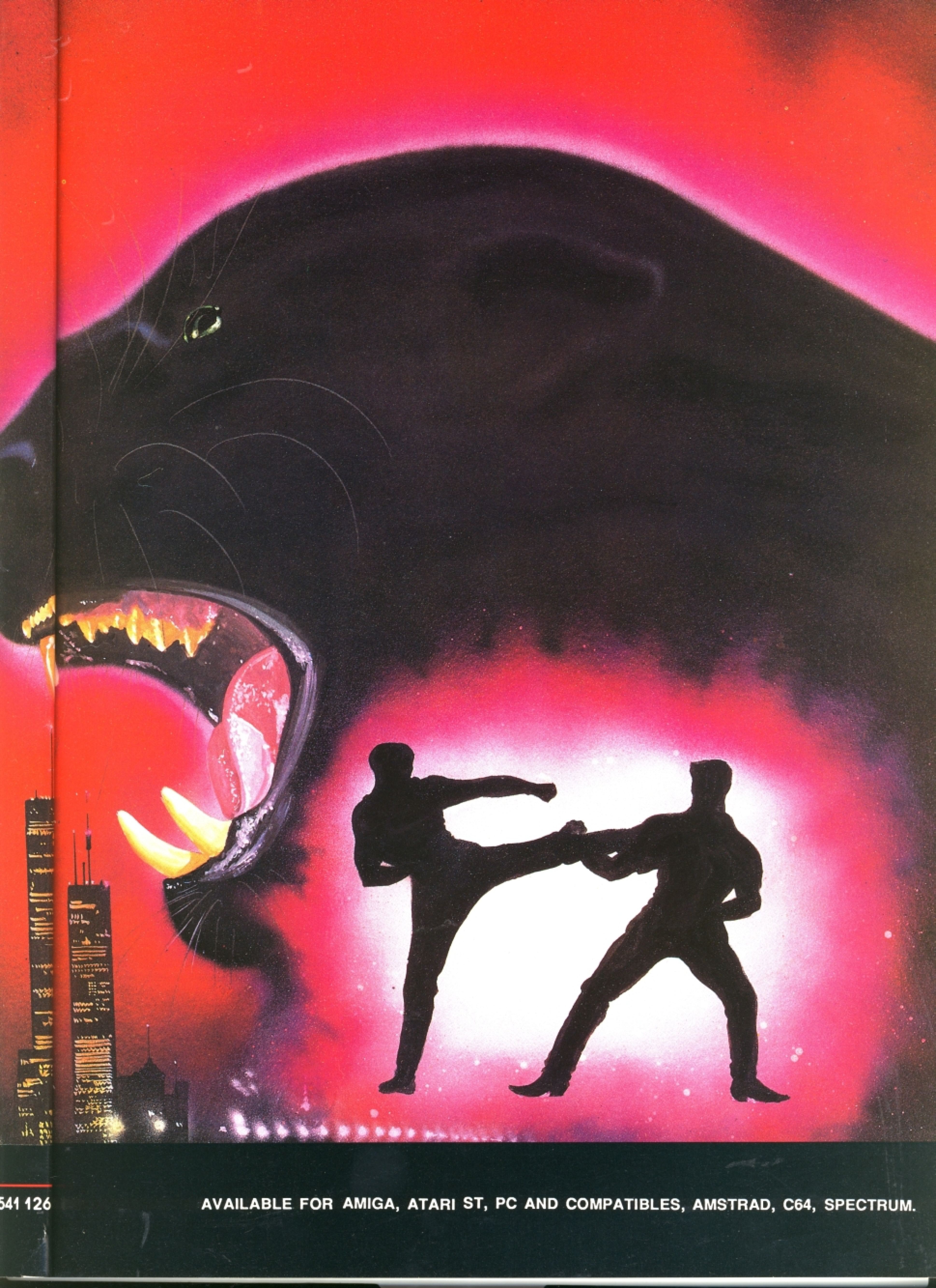
•Domark is evidently determined to get as much out of its hit **Hard Drivin'** as possible. This month sees the PC version of the game released, and also – a bit ground-breaking, this – an Archimedes version. As well as the extra tracks disks, which should be released in the next month or so, the company is planning a **Hard Drivin' Construction Kit** for the end of the year. On the licence front, Domark have snapped up rights to the coin-op **Klax** – even though the game hasn't even reached the arcades yet! The Doms are also groaning under the weight of the packaging for Broderbund's **Ancient Art Of War** and **AAOW At Sea**, which collectively have manuals the size of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Coming via fork lift truck into the shops late spring.

•Still heady after all the praise heaped on **F16 Combat Pilot**, Digital Integration releases the first of the 16-bit versions of **Advanced Tactical Fighter (ATF)** next month; PC and ST come first, with the Amiga version lagging behind into April–May.

•John Phillips, programmer of the famed **Nebulus**, is presently working on Hewson's Scavenger which should be in the shops around June time (see previews).

Oi written and compiled by Christina Erskine


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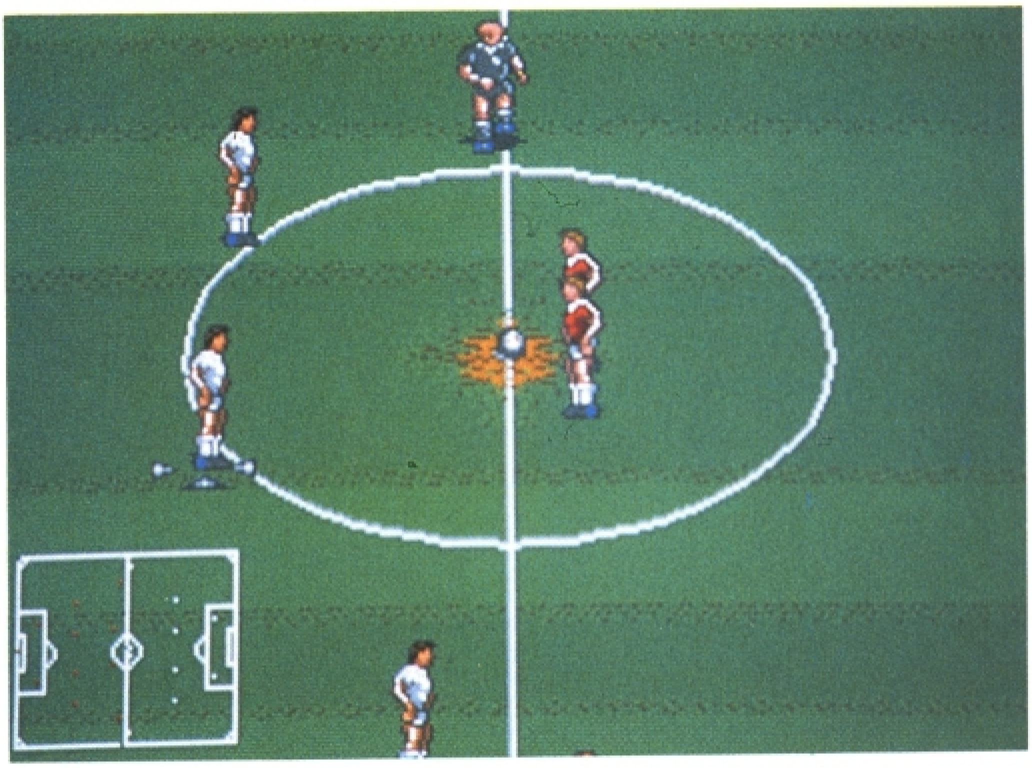


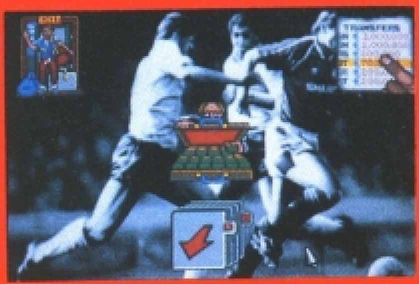
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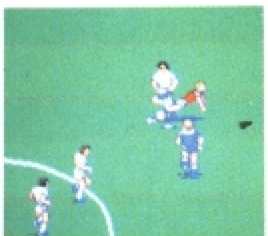
MANCHES

Soon the sun'll be shining, birds singing, little ba bas bleating in the fields... Hurrah! And what will you be doing while the wonders of nature explode – nay erupt – in splendiferous wonder? Sitting in a darkened room playing one of these rather super, forthcoming games, we'll wager.





An offer is made for one of your transfer listed players. Will you accept it? Gosh, the tension is unbearable!



The way Manchester United are faring at the moment, a computer game is probably just about the only place where you're gonna find 'the lads' winning this season. It's being programmed by the chappies up at Teque, the coding house responsible for the 16-bit versions of *Blasteroids* and *Thunderbirds* amongst other things. Krisalis will be publishing the game, which, rather than being a management sim or arcade game, is both! Ho yes, none of yer half measures here, matey. It's the whole kaboodle squodged into one massive epic game.

The 'plot', such as it is, is the same as you find in every soccer game. Pilot the 'Red Devils', as they are known around Rusholme and the Salford Docks, to the top of Division One taking in the F.A. Cup along the way. In the management section, there's all the usual features, plus absolutely billions of other new ones never before seen on this planet.* Teams are chosen from a squad of players, depending upon which are fit and available for play. Each player must be given a training program, concentrating on the skills which are most relevant to that particular player. There's not much point making a goalie concentrate on his heading skills for example, is there? The intensity of the training program can also be varied, but push a player too hard and he could easily sustain an injury.

Should you suddenly find yourself bereft of enough players to make up a decent team, you could, like the real Manchester United, turn to the transfer market to fill up the squad. Some bargains can occasionally be picked up, but more often than not players are a tad on the expensive side. You can also make bids for players that aren't on the



A short animated section of the draws in the F.A. Cup. As this only happens for the semi finals and finals, you won't be seeing it much.

transfer list, but these offers are much more likely to be refused; more often than not by your board of directors who don't want to pay seven million, even for a stunning player like Emelyn Hughes.

Once you have managed to string a team together from various has beens and runner beans, it's into the arcade game to give the opposition a good kicking. This is a side on view jobbie, with an absolutely huuuuuge pitch and billions of tactics to use. There are linesmen belting up and down the



*Well, in the ZERO offices at least.

ESTER UNITED



'Ere we go, 'ere we go , 'ere we go... It's the first match of the season, all the uncertainty, the apprehension, the excitement. Oooh, it fair makes you hold your breath in anticipation. *(No it doesn't. Ed.)*





The local rag keeps you up to date with all the latest news that's fit to print, plus quite a bit that isn't. Bit like ZERO, really. (Talk about a snappy headline.)

sidelines trying to keep up with you as you headbutt and foul your way to the top of the table and many other brilliant details. Teque have made this section as realistic as possible and consequently, the referee has a little bald patch.

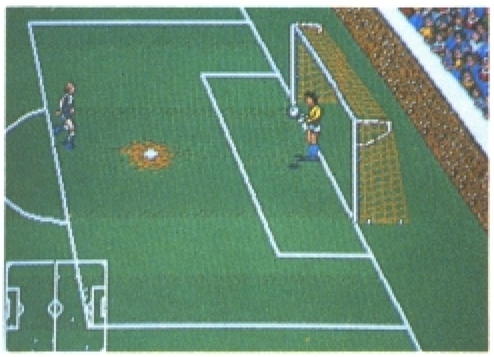
All of the current Division One teams are in there and the computer simulates the other games that are taking place on any particular day. Each of the computer teams have been programmed to have approximately the same chance of winning the league as their real life counterparts; so after a few games you're likely to find Liverpool and Arsenal battling it out for the top place and Manchester United (under your masterful control) languishing somewhere down at the bottom.

Should you decide that you don't want to be playing against Arsenal, you can change the name of any of the opposition teams and players, in addition to the skill levels of the arcade game. This way, you could even find yourself up against Neasden F.C. itself in the F.A. Cup Final. (Neasden are more likely to get there than Man U., but we won't mention that.)

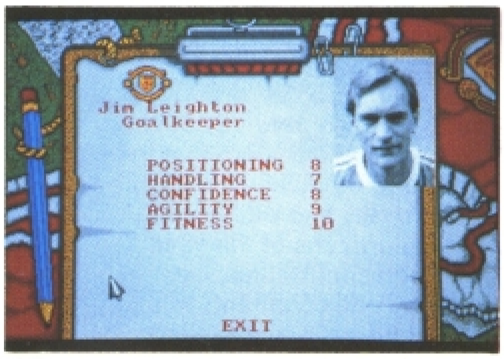
There are just squillions of other things to do, squillions more than we can mention in this petite preview and, as you can see, the game's wrapped up in some brilliant graphics. Look out for the full review of *Manchester United* coming soon to these hallowed pages.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Manchester United
PUBLISHER	Krisalis
PRICE	£19.99/ £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	March



And it's Neasden's most expensive forward, Aidan Flurry, about to show his mettle for the 18th time this season... Goooooaal!



Hmmm... Man. U's answer to Pélé will have to do a bit more training if he's going to prevent Aidan from scoring his 3rd hat trick of the match.

THREE MILDLY INTERESTING MANCHESTER UNITED FACTS

- During the 1957/8 season, most of the squad were killed when their plane crashed into the side of a mountain. Matt Busby, then manager, went on to drag a young squad together which, against all the odds, reached the F.A. Cup final against Bolton Wanderers. The whole country were rooting for them... could they win??!! No, actually, Bolton gave 'em a right pasting. Hur hur.
- Last season, Manchester United didn't win anything, unlike Bolton, who won the Sherpa Van Trophy.
- Manchester United are fairly close to the bottom of their Division. Funnily enough, Bolton are very likely to get promoted this season. How about that then?



BSS JAYNE SEYMOUR



Irradiated aliens. A deserted space hulk. A knackered computer. All in a day's work for *Sean Kelly*, who put a goldfish bowl on his head ready to confront Gremlin's *BSS Jayne Seymour*...



This is one of the disgusting mutant monsters that you're going to come across. Serves you right really for belonging to a race that trolls around the galaxy picking up 'specimens' of other weird life forms without so much as a 'by your leave'.





This is your backpack. Okay, so it doesn't look that much like a backpack but then not all spaceships are rows of corridors and people don't usually leave cigarettes and matches lying round on the floor. Listen matey, you're going to have to use your imagination if you're ever going to enjoy computer games.



Oh look! Someone's left a cigarette and a box of matches on the floor. There's a stroke of luck! Hang about, I don't smoke...

Ten years ago (or about two hundred years from now, if you see what I mean) the rather large Biological Survey Ship Jayne Seymour left Earth with the aim of reaching the Orion arm of the galaxy. The mission was to collect any alien life forms they encountered and bring them back to earth. Unfortunately (where would computer games be without the dreaded 'unfortunately'? But I digress...) a slight slip of the gearstick, a dodgy light speed jump and what happens? Well the entire vessel is bathed in radiation when it emerges too near a Wolf-Raert star. Due to one of those strange computer game quirks, all the staff are turned into Chernobyl chunks and all the aliens quickly escape to roam the ship unharmed. Major bummer.

Anyhow, ten years on, the radioactivity has cooled down a little and it's been decided by your bosses that the time is right to send in a fairly dispensible but vaguely intelligent stooge to check out what's happening. Given that this has been decided by your 'superiors', it's not a surprise who's gonna get to go.

That's the scenario anyhow. What you are actually left with beyond the codswallop is a game that bears an uncanny resemblance to *Dungeon Master* set in space. From what ZE has seen of *BSS Jayne (I love pra through French gardens) Seymou* however, it would seem that there lot more to do than wander round casting spells and killing trolls.

There are tons of things to find including various chips, each of w gives you one command so that y can find the programmable droids for example, if you had a droid wi 'GO TO', 'ATTACK' and 'SELF DESTRUCT' commands, you coul the droid to room 201 where a na mutated beastie is waiting for you. He would attack any other mutants he encountered on the way and on reaching room 201 would self destruct. That'd give the beastie a surprise, no doubt about it. Similarly, you could send it into radioactive rooms to collect essential bits whilst you doss about drinking coffee all day. Just about the only perk you're gonna get, really.

The ship is absolutely massive and there are innumerable tasks to accomplish before your mission is anywhere near completed. There's monsters to kill, weapons to collect and build and innumerable ship's computers to repair. From what the ZERO spy saw of *BSS Jayne Rosesandperfume*, it looks like it could be one of the games keeping you out of the sun for months on end this summer. It'll be out in March on ST and Amiga, at a price bearing an uncanny resemblance to £24.99.



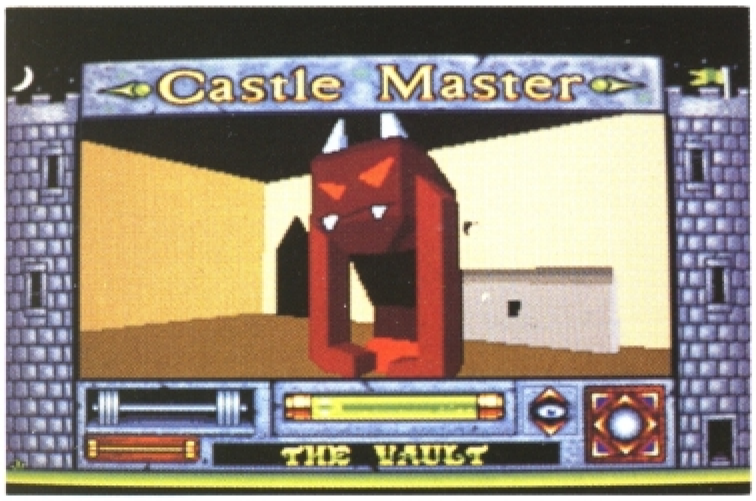
WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	BSS Seymour
PUBLISHER	Gremlin
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	March

CASTLE MASTER

Crumbling crenellations! There's something spooky behind the drawbridge! While waiting to get his chainmail back from the dry cleaners, *Paul Lakin* wandered in for a look.

A year is a long time in anybody's life. It's about the time that it's taken Incentive to develop *Castle Master* and it's 24 hours short of the deadline for ghostification in the storm-covered Castle Eternity. Built by the Normans over the grave of the Master of the Black Arts (a trifle rash methinks), by the time the sixteenth century has come around, Castle Eternity has become rather different from our own dear Travellers' Rests. Anyone foolish enough to seek shelter within its grim walls is held captive for a year and a day before being turned into a spirit and not even a malt one at that.

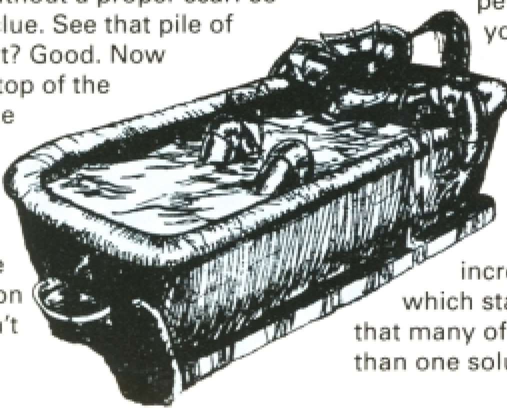




O.K this is the vault, so where's the oxy acetelene torch.

This fact might be of only minor interest to the average passer by. When you're standing outside the drawbridge a year after your twin vanished inside the bowels of the castle, it's probably more important than your Poll Tax rating. Obviously your next move is to break into the castle and indulge in a bit of that old rescue malarkey. Sadly this is not as easy as it might sound. *(Actually it doesn't sound at all easy. Ed.)*

The first problem you face in *Castle Master*, Domark's latest action adventure, is how to get into the flippin' castle in the first place. Fortunately for you, ZERO looks after its readers and hates to think of them hanging around drafty moats without a proper scarf so here's a leetle clue. See that pile of rocks by the hut? Good. Now look up by the top of the drawbridge. See that hole? Right, now think about it. There, what other magazine gives you tips on a game that isn't even out yet?



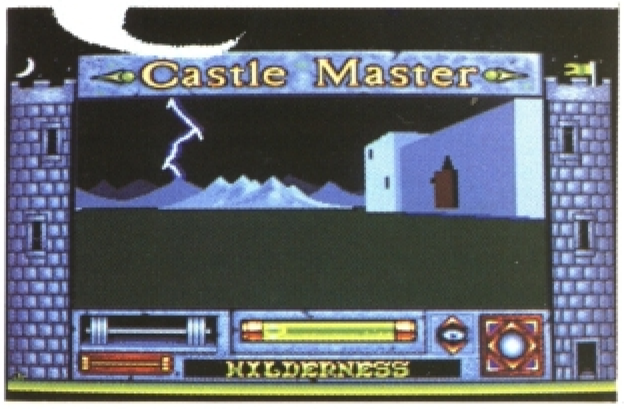
Once inside then you're on your own I'm afraid, with only two missions for company. Firstly you must rescue the Prince or Princess (that's your twin). And secondly you must clear the castle of evil spirits. And after that... well I don't think there'll be an 'after that', so let's not worry about it.

The evil spirits and your twin both give themselves away by making suitable noises, either ghostly or plaintive, the direction of which you can try to judge and pray not to get wrong. In a game full of problems and puzzles, at least dealing with the evil spirits is relatively straightforward. You just heave a brick at them.

By looking at the spirit level (sorry, Incentive's 'joke' not mine) you can judge the number and strength of the nasties. If the level reaches the top then down comes the portcullis and bang go your chances of retiring to that pleasant cottage by the sea.

Although this might give you a rather bleak view on life, it will at least be a 3D one. The veritable maze of passages, kitchens, libraries and the like that you face when you enter the castle are all displayed in solid 3D graphics, incorporating an advanced form of Incentive's Freescape technique. These graphics are viewed from a first person perspective, which means t you see the game through your character's eyes – no turning your back o putting your hands ove your eyes.

Those eyes better be k fairly well peeled as you attempt to solve the increasingly difficult probler which stand in your way. The fac that many of these problems have m than one solution (and that's not counting the good old 'go and get yourself killed' solution) may be of some comfort as you're cornered in a dead end by three million things going "AAARRRGH" – but I doubt it.



Twin or no twin, I can think of a million and one places *I'd* rather be. Listen, I've got a great idea: let's just pack it in and go home.

All the action takes place in an extremely large and complex castle with more rooms than you can count on the thumbs of one finger. As well as the usual run of libraries, kitchens and the like, there's also a gym, useful for increasing your strength and a toilet, useful for... well it can be pretty frightening in these adventures.

Movement around this 16th Century Dockland Development is by either walking, running or crawling depending on the size of the room and the lillyness of your liver. As well as lobbing stones at passing phantoms you'll also have to pick up keys, food and anything else that takes your fancy.

In the unlikely event of anyone making it all the way to the end, they will be rewarded with a special graphic and musical sequence. Those who don't even get beyond the drawbridge will have to make do with the 24 page booklet written by Mel Croucher introducing the adventure. *Castle Master* will be available in April so that gives you a little time to put a shine to your codpiece. Get to it.

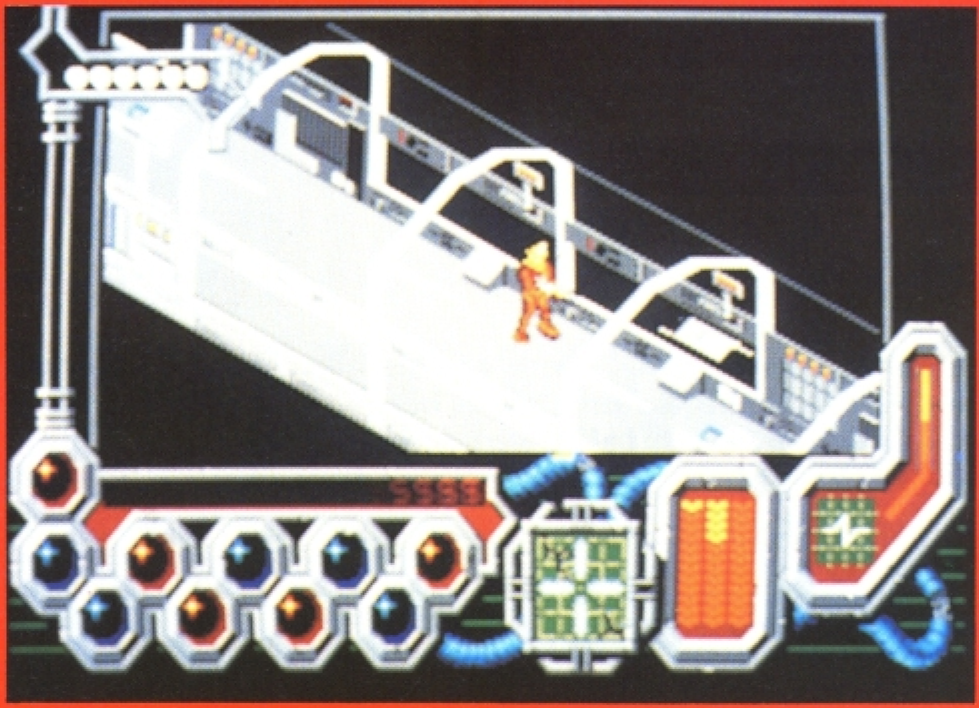
STOP

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Castle Master
PUBLISHER	Domark
PRICE	ST/Amiga £19.99
	PC £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	April

ST CHART

1. **CHAOS STRIKES BACK** FTL
2. **FIGHTER BOMBER** Activision
3. **DOUBLE DRAGON II** Virgin Mastertronic
4. **NINJA WARRIORS** Virgin
5. **FUTURE WARS** Palace
6. **GHOSTS 'N' GHOULS** Capcom/US Gold
7. **GHOSTBUSTERS II** Activision
8. **UNTOUCHABLES** Ocean
9. **CHASE HQ** Ocean
10. **HARD DRIVIN'** Domark



WRECKERS



Life in a lighthouse isn't a bundle of laughs at the best of times. And when the lighthouse in question is based on a space station and is under attack from venomous green splurges, then it's high time to reach for the valium.

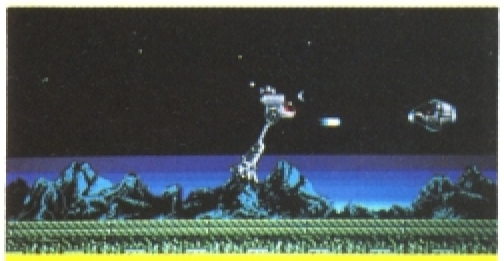
● Available from Audiogenic in the Spring on ST and Amiga priced £19.95.



SCAVENGER

Now you might think it's pretty tough when you get lost on the A1, but that's nothing compared to Scavenger's problems. Not only is he not sure if he's on the right road, he's not even sure if he's in the right time zone. And surprise, surprise – within each era Scavenger meets inhabitants and creatures who are more likely to obstruct than direct him. Who said scenarios weren't a load of bollards?

● Available from Hewson on ST and Amiga, around the middle of next year, priced £19.99



INTRUDER

Don't be fooled by your opponents' Marx Brothers sense of humour in this lunatic shoot 'em up. Wacky or not they're still out to blow you apart. Shoot first and laugh later.

● Available mid February from Ubi Soft on the ST, priced to be announced.

EMLYN HUGHES ARCADE QUIZ

Relief for those of you still in mourning since Emlyn Hughes left *A Question Of Sport*. This combination of board game and pub trivia machine has Emlyn's face showing his despair as you get yet another question wrong. Bet he doesn't know who wrote Beethoven's Fifth either.

● Available mid February from Audiogenic on ST and Amiga priced £19.95







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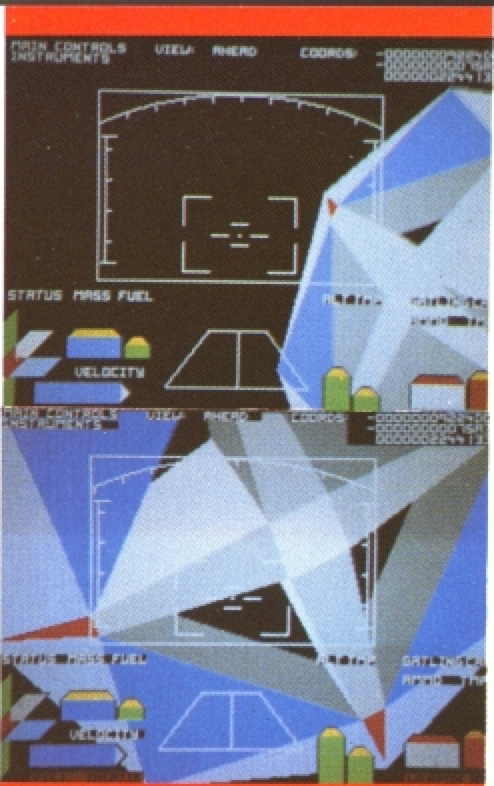
16-BIT

THE·ACTION·STARTS·HERE·

CodeMasters, PO Box 6, Southam Warwickshire CV33 0SH

AMIGA CHART

1. **DOUBLE DRAGON II** Virgin Mastertronic
2. **NINJA WARRIORS** Virgin Mastertronic
3. **GHOSTS 'N' GHOULS** Capcom/US Gold
4. **FUTURE WARS** Palace
5. **HARD DRIVIN'** Domark
6. **IT CAME FROM THE DESERT**/Cinemaware
7. **OPERATION THUNDERBOLT**/Ocean
8. **SPACE ACE** Empire/Readysoft
9. **BATMAN** Ocean
10. **CHASE HQ** Ocean



DOMINION

At last a chance for ST and Amiga owners to find out who really is the greatest. Dominion sets you trading and fighting your way across the Solar System. As well as computer generated opponents there is the possibility to network up to eight computers together. Amiga, PC and ST players can trade, fight and squabble away to their hearts content.

● Available from Gainstar at the end of February on ST, PC and Amiga priced £24.95.

PC CHART

1. **GHOSTBUSTERS II** Activision
2. **XENON II** Imageworks
3. **CHESSMASTER 2100** CDS
4. **LEISURESUIT LARRY II** Sierra
5. **BATTLECHESS** Interplay/Electronic Arts
6. **KING'S QUEST TRIPLE PACK**/Sierra
7. **INDIANAPOLIS 500** Electronic Arts
8. **POPULOUS** Electronic Arts
9. **STAR TREK V** Mindscape
10. **DOUBLE DRAGON II** Virgin Mastertronic

Charts supplied by the Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street. Tel. 01-631 1234

STARLORD

Not content with stunning the world with *Midwinter*, Mike Singleton has already lined up his next project, setting his sights beyond the boundaries of earth. This is an early screen from *Starlord*, an intergalactic epic, out from the Maestro's Micro some time later this year.

● On the Rainbird label on ST and Amiga, both price and release date to be announced.



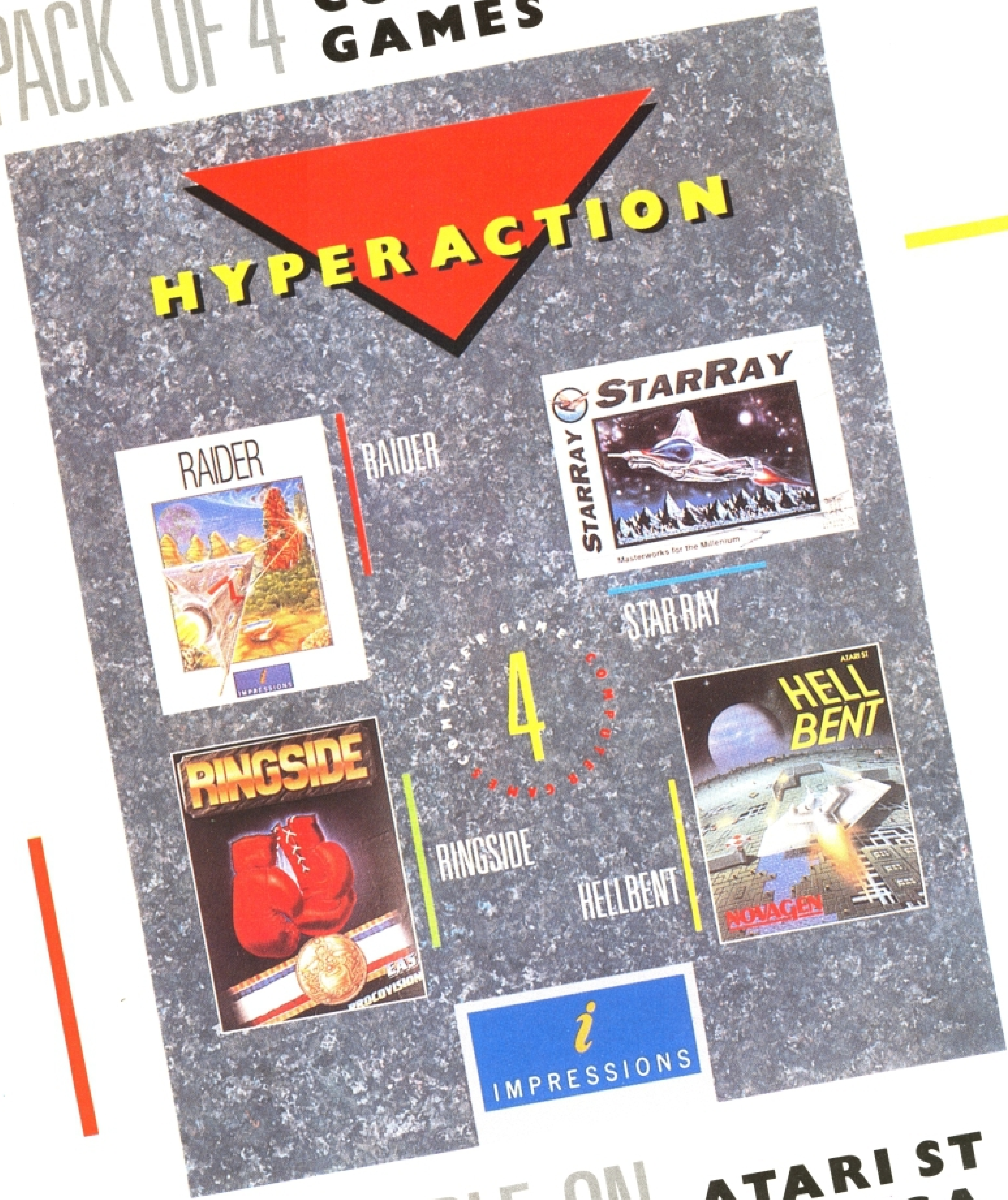
NETHERWORLD

Diamonds are, of course, a girl's best friend. They're also good company to anyone wishing to escape a world locked in eternal conflict. Not that obtaining these diamonds is exactly a job for the lily-livered. There's a small matter of demonic dragons, acid bubbles and tormented souls to be dealt with first. Failure to block this lot off could mean that the only diamonds you see will be on your mausoleum. Sweet dreams!

● Available now from Hewson on ST and Amiga, priced £19.99. Out on PC in March, price to be announced. STOP



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Fancy taking an exhilarating drive? You could a) join a Scandinavian rally team and zoom through the forests of Finland screaming "Hekki, hekki, hekki", or b) Tear through Hendon in a Ford Cortina with no silencer or c) load one of the many available driving games into your computer. *Duncan MacDonald* goes for the third option and takes eight packages for a spin.

JAM JAR JA

FAST LANE

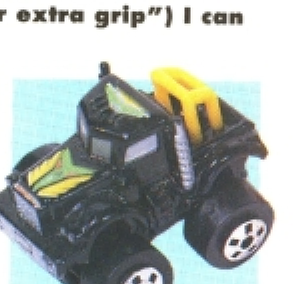
Artronic. Oh dear. It has to be said that this isn't a particularly brilliant '24 hour road race' game. In fact a word to describe it rhymes with 'goose-less' (if you're Bernard Matthews that is).
The opening section promises quite a lot (as is often the case with Artronic games), with all sorts of changeable option thingies on your motor and some rather nice static graphics. Unfortunately, once you've started the 'game proper' and actually race around one of the tracks a few times, things start to 'pall' somewhat. For instance, when the car you're chasing suddenly 'disappears' as he goes across the lap-mark line, you wonder "what's going on? Has he been beamed up by the USS Enterprise?" I don't think so somehow, do you? Besides, the animation isn't very good anyway – the other cars sort of look as if they're 'cut' and 'pasted on' again each time the frames update (which isn't that often, in any case).



In a pair of heavy-duty Marigolds ("for extra grip") I can really burn some rubber!

OVERALL SCORE 60

ST	AMIGA	PC
AVAILABLE NOW	AVAILABLE NOW	UNAVAILABLE



STUNT CAR RACER

Microprose. I'm not going to bore you with the details because we've done this one to death. But I couldn't leave it out because it's so good...
Now this just shows what can be done with filled vectors and a racing game. A brilliant idea, fantastically executed by the geezer who did *The Sentinel:* Geoff Crammond. I can't really fault *Stunt Car Racer.* In fact, as far as I'm concerned, it's set the standard by which future driving 'simulations' will be judged.

OVERALL SCORE 92

ST	AMIGA	PC
AVAILABLE NOW	AVAILABLE NOW	AVAILABLE NOW



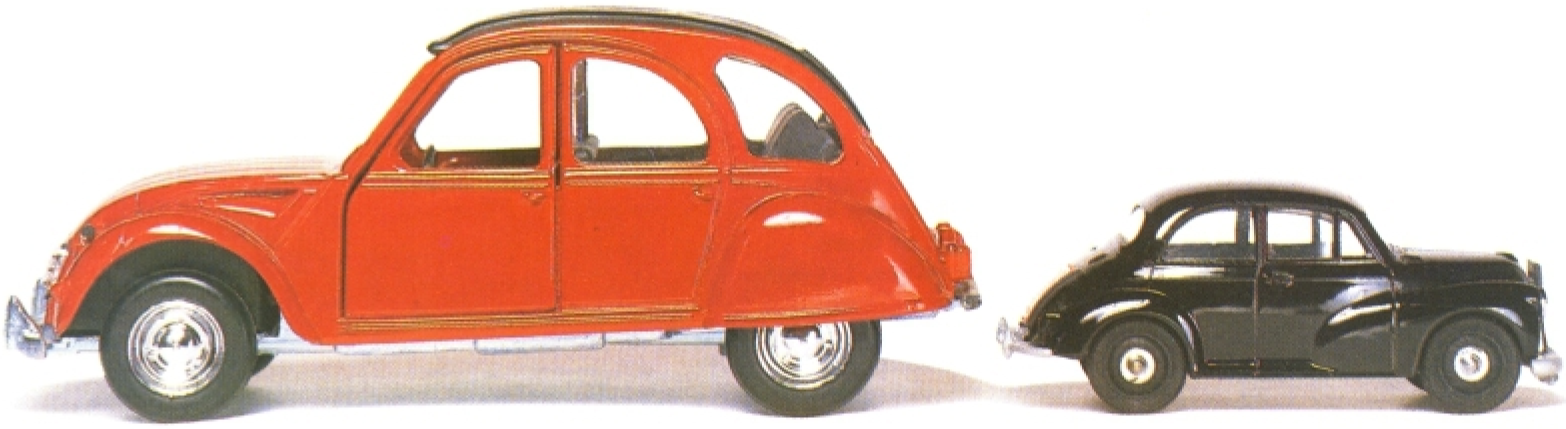
BUGGY BOY

Elite. This isn't exactly a simulation and it isn't exactly new either, but we've included it because quite frankly a) it's brilliant fun and b) it's stood the test of time remarkably well.
A conversion from the Sega Coin-op of the same name, *Buggy Boy* is a 'view your car from behind' 3D racer. The graphics, as in the original coin-op, are huge, but the scrolling and animation are still beautifully smooth. A great game. Why couldn't *Turbo Outrun* or *Chase HQ* have been this good?

OVERALL SCORE 82

ST	AMIGA	PC
AVAILABLE NOW	AVAILABLE NOW	UNAVAILABLE





JAPES

RAC LOMBARD RALLY

Mandarin. I actually thought that this game was rather spiffing when it first came out but, erm, somehow it doesn't seem quite so brill now though.

What is good about it, however, is the scenario: Rally Driving – and, because most rally drivers tend to be Scandinavian, you get a chance to pretend that you're Finnish. And that means you get to shout things like "nonni, nonni, nonni" at your co-driver, which is incredibly satisfying. The viewpoint from inside the car is quite nice – you see the driver turn the steering wheel and change gear. However, the map on the lap of the co-driver isn't an accurate rendition of the route you're actually driving, so I'll remove five points. Another thing that lets it down is the quality of the exterior graphics and the collision detection. Mind you, I mustn't be too hard on *RAC Lombard Rally*, as its problem is that it's dated a bit – which sort of makes me wish that somebody would work on producing Lombard RAC Rally II (or something).

OVERALL SCORE 77

ST: AVAILABLE NOW | AMIGA: AVAILABLE NOW | PC: UNAVAILABLE





HARD DRIVIN'

Domark. This one is aptly titled, although I personally would have gone a bit further and called it Nearly Impossible Driving, given the lack of control you have over the car. It's another coin-op conversion, but one that didn't quite come off – for many reasons. Here are a few...

Firstly, there's the tracks. There are two of them: the Speed Track and the Stunt Track. The Speed Track is just that, lots of long straight sections of road (where you can go flat out), connected together by a few not too sharp corners. It's a doddle, once you've mastered the control method, unlike the Stunt Track, which is almost impossible to take at the sort of speeds needed to beat the computer-controlled Photon Phantom car.

Secondly there are the bugs. In real life, if a car travels behind something (such as a gigantic concrete bridge support post) you expect it to disappear from view, don't you? Yes. Well, in *Hard Drivin'* this isn't always the case. It's like being Superman– you can see right through things.

Thirdly there's the longevity. This is the biggest failing, and largely the fault of the coin-op – which wouldn't really keep you going back after about 20 goes or so (I should know; I spent 20 bloomin' quid on it). But the fact that you can race 'yourself', taking on the Photon Phantom helps a bit. All in all though, *Hard Drivin'* is a fairly good conversion of the coin-op original. Quite a good effort overall though, so (sort of) well done Domark.



It's the Little House On The Prairie. In the middle of the road... HELP!



Oh look, an unfinished bridge. Must be a Conservative Council.



Didn't know there was a Spaghetti House round here... Ravioli, anyone?

OVERALL SCORE 75

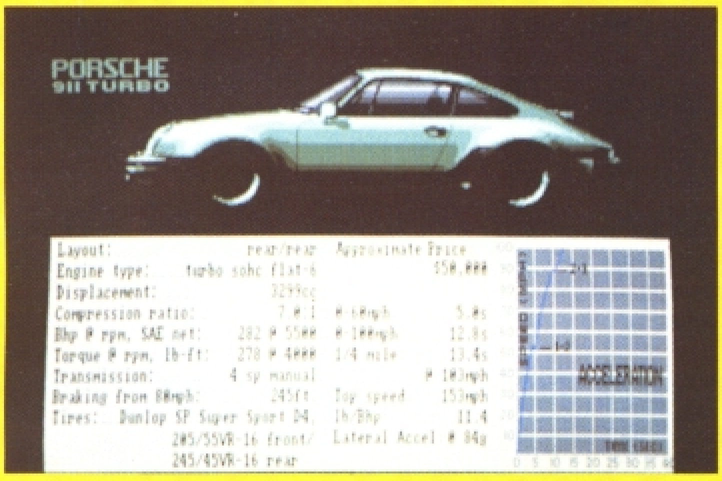
ST: AVAILABLE NOW | AMIGA: AVAILABLE NOW | PC: COMING SOON



TEST DRIVE

Accolade. "But you have to drive on the wrong side of the road" moaned most people about this driving simulation set in the States. How very British of them. Me, I couldn't give a hoot (besides, I tend to spend half my time driving on the 'wrong' side of the road even in this country). Anyway, who cares what side of the road you drive on, as long as you follow the cardinal rule of 'not hitting anything else', which is exactly what *Test Drive* is all about.

You choose one (of four) high powered sports cars: an Allegro, a Beetle, a Lada or a Reliant Robin. *(A Porsche, a*



Ferrari, a Chevvy or a Lambourghini actually. Ed.) Like *Lombard RAC Rally*, you see the gears being changed, but the in-car graphics are nicer. Unlike *Lombard RAC Rally*, there's only one road scenario – a side of a cliff hairpin jobbie (uppies on one side, downies on the other), but the feeling of speed and control you get is much better. There are police cars peppered about, which will pull in front of you and give you a speeding ticket – if you let them catch you up, that is – and there are several stages to get through (the roads getting more and more torturous as you progress). The rewards for doing well appear as little scrolling messages when you reach a checkpoint: "You were driving like a whirlwind back there, my friend" might sound a trifle corny as a line of dialogue in a movie, but after outrunning two police cars and not crashing once, it somehow loses its naffness. The collision detection is a bit iffy, but with a game that's this much fun I don't care.

OVERALL SCORE 87

ST: AVAILABLE NOW | AMIGA: AVAILABLE NOW | PC: AVAILABLE NOW



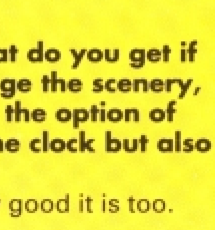
THE DUEL
(TEST DRIVE II)

Accolade. Question: What do you get if you take *Test Drive*, change the scenery, change the cars and give the option of not only racing against the clock but also against another car?

Answer: *The Duel (Test Drive II)*. And jolly good it is too.

OVERALL SCORE 87

ST: COMING SOON | AMIGA: AVAILABLE NOW | PC: AVAILABLE NOW



INDIANAPOLIS 500

ZERO HERO

The Indianapolis 500. It's that American race we get once a year on telly on a Saturday afternoon. It's the one that both Paul Newman and Steve McQueen have driven in. The one that Formula One Grand Prix purists sniff at. Well now's your chance to join in...



Look, no hands! This thought-powered steering's the biz!

THE CIRCUIT

It's two miles long and basically round with some long straight bits and you have to drive round it anticlockwise. There are 33 cars taking place in the race and one of them is yours. You can choose a Cosworth, a Buick or a Chevrolet.

Before the race you can fiddle with your chosen car to your heart's content. You can pick different tyre compounds, change the angles of your aerofoils, choose how much fuel to take and just about anything else you would be able to do in the real thing. We've all heard other games boast that 'changing the settings will radically effect the handling characteristics of your car etc. etc.', but in *Indianapolis 500* they really do. You can feel it through the joystick or keyboard.

Forget every single driving game you've 'played' before: *Indianapolis 500* has the most realistic feel of them all. Yes, it's better even than the *Monaco Grand Prix* coin-op. There's understeer, over-steer, skids... the works. It's all, erm, 'awesome'

THE RACE

The race is very straightforward. You go round and round (and round and, er, round). There's not a lot here for people who like remem-

WHAT'S WHAT	
TITLE	Indianapolis 500
PUBLISHER	Electronic Arts
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	PC
RELEASED	Out now

NAPOLIS

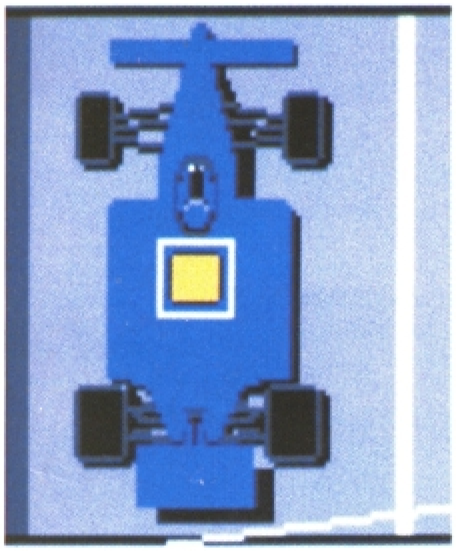


HASSLE FACTOR: -2
Two disks. Once the second disk is in, it never needs to come out again. Hence the minus number.

bering where all the right and left hand turns are in a series of different Grand Prix racetracks. Actually, that's a lie – there is something for them, and it's called, er, Alan. *(It's actually called nail-biting excitement. Ed.)* Oh. Sorry.

Before beginning a race you zap around the track to get a good qualifying time. This gives you a grid position placing for the rolling start. And then (cue Murray Walker), "They're off". There aren't any gears to faff around with in this game and it's just as well. It doesn't need any. You've got an automatic gearbox, and you take the whole race on full throttle (at about 200 mph). All the other cars are equally fast, very 'intelligent' and are apt to do unpredictable things at unexpected times. Crashes happen without you being anywhere near them and a yellow flag comes out at the top of the screen to warn you that there's a wreck somewhere on the track.

Trying to overtake, whether on the inside or the outside, can be absolute murder. (While sometimes it can be a doddle.) You've got small rear view mirrors but visibility to the sides is non-existent – so if you pass a car and then pull in front of it before you're actually clear, a collision of wheels (your back one and his front one) will take place. Sometimes he goes spinning off, sometimes you go spinning off, but generally you both go spinning along the track for about 500 yards, bouncing off the barriers before coming to rest. And if you come to rest in the middle of the track you'll get ploughed into by a load of other cars – just like the real thing. In a long race you *have* to make pit-stops and as the race continues without you (you can see your opponents zoom past in the distance), you want to be pretty sharpish about doing it. Make sure you know what buttons to press (for tyre changing, refueling, wheel alignment etc), and press them quickly. Then get out of the pits and back onto the track (pretty dangerous in itself: don't forget to mirror, signal and manoeuvre). It's a time consuming race but luckily there's a pause button so you can pop to the toilet every so often.



Whoo! Get those graphics! Lifelike or what!

THE ACTION REPLAY

The race can be 'broken into' at any point and you can have an action replay of the previous 30 seconds racing. And what a wealth of camera angles you have to choose from. It's all just like on the telly (and I'm talking about *Grandstand*, not *The Russ Abbott Show*)...

1 IN CAR. Obvious really. Your 'cockpit view'. (Except you can't see your instruments or front wheels.)

2 BEHIND. A ground based view from the middle of the track and about one car length behind you.

3 TRACK. You know the camera views you get on televised Grand Prix races (there are loads of cameras staggered around the course, and the view switches from one to the other as the cars go by)? Well that's what this is: seen from ground level. Your car is always in the middle of each camera 'pan'.

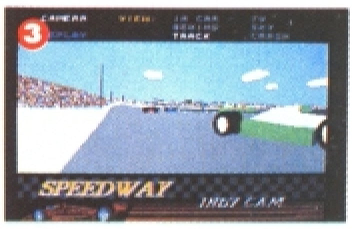
4 TV. This is the same as Track, but viewed from about 50 feet in the air.

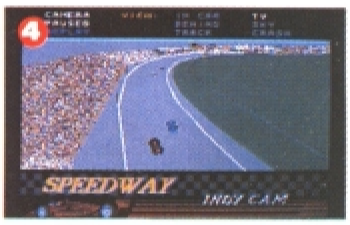
5 SKY. Nothing to do with Rupert Murdoch (thankfully). This view is as if seen from a helicopter following your car (at a height of about 50 feet). Watch yourself trying to stupidly squeeze into a gap that's actually far too small for your car. Watch your car go into an uncontrollable spin and then go 'boom'.

6 CRASH. The same as TV, but instead of following *your* car, it homes in on any cars in the middle of a pile-up. I can't stress how brilliant this is. Well, I can actually – it's very brilliant. Debris flies off as the cars spin around, collide with one another and bounce off the crash barriers. Just like the real *Indianapolis 500* on the telly.









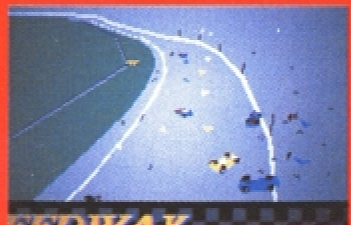




THE ALTERNATIVE 'RACE'

If going round in circles 200 times isn't your cup of tea, try playing Indianapolis 500 in this way...

1) Get a crap qualifying time so that you can start in last place.
2) As soon as the race starts, do a three point turn (yes, you can reverse.) and make your car point in the wrong direction.
3) Hit the throttle and accelerate to full speed (about 200 mph).
4) Keep your eyes peeled for the massive stream of 'unstoppable' oncoming traffic (also going 200 mph).
5) Try to hit the lead car square on the nose (total impact speed: 400 mph).
6) You now have no control over your car, so sit back and count to 20 and watch the scenery spin around while the 'domino effect' of a multi-car pile up happens somewhere behind you.
7) Switch to Action Replay and tap the 'View Crash' button.
8) Watch in awe as the lead car ploughs head on into yours, spins uncontrollably across the track, bounces off a barrier and straight into another car (which then does the same to yet another one).
9) Think to yourself that it's quite like snooker.
10) Do a quick wreck count and then have another go.



Look! I got eight!!!!!

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	95
S	SOUND	91
A	ADDICTIVENESS	92
E	EXECUTION	95

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

An incredibly fast racing game with outstanding graphics and animation. Just like watching the real thing on telly (except Paul Newman isn't in it).

94

STOP



IF WAR IS HELL... DRIVE THE DEVIL'S MACHINE
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CONQUEROR
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Rainbow Arts, Sketty Close,
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ZERO reviews

CRITICS' CORNER

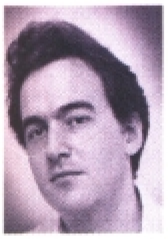
Roll up, roll up, roll up. It's that critical part of the mag again – and here are your hosts (in no particular order)...



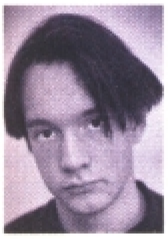
Sean Kelly: Sean's been having a nightmare of a time with his mountain bike this month. Firstly, on the way to work one morning he fell off it and grazed his forehead. It was an embarrassingly complex graze actually, in as much as it resembled a rather rude word with four letters (the one beginning with 'F') – and it looked a bit like a tattoo. Sean decided to wear a sweatband until it healed (as the only alternative was to join the National Front). As if the F–word graze wasn't bad enough, Sean gaily bounded out of the office that same evening to find his trusty Peugeot's chain had been half-inched by an unscrupulous fiend (and he had to go home on the tube). Will Sean's bicycle fortunes improve next month? You can only find out here.



Tim Ponting: Not many people know this, but our ludicrously tall editor is in fact... a drummer. That's right, he hits things with sticks. So what 'stick hitting' antics has Tim been up to this month? Well, he's tapped out a vicious paradiddle on virtually everything that's come within reach. There are a myriad of little dents in all the office desks, chairs, staplers, computers, the office radio, the office kettle, all the shelves and all the disk boxes scattered around. Any panel-beaters reading should be worried – if this man decides to change his occupation, he could one day put you out of business. We'll be following Tim's 'drumming career' in this space as the months unfold.

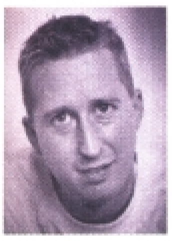


Paul Lakin: There are some things you can't tell from a photograph, so we'll have to tell you this or you'll never know: Paul Lakin is rather 'posh'. In fact he's incredibly posh. A real toff, actually – posher even than, erm, Edward Fox (or someone). And to top it all he lives in a giant castle with a moat and everything –the whole works. There's even a working drawbridge but he normally leaves it in the up position (as there's a secret underground passage to his back door anyway). Basically, Paul is the nearest thing ZERO has to an actual member of the Royal Family on its payroll. And, you never know, maybe Paul *is* actually a member of the Royal Family. We'll take a good look at his coat of arms and family tree next time.



Davjd McCandless: Young Macca, it has to be said, is probably one of the country's greatest up and coming criminals – a new John McVicar in the making. More about his law-breaking activities next issue, but first a reminder that just because someone flouts society's rules, it doesn't necessarily mean that he or she is an uncouth, non-intelligent, smelly yobbo. Macca proves the point in question – so he's got a sawn-off shotgun? So what? What he's also got is a small book in which he presses flowers (which he then embellishes with gold leaf, after writing a little poem underneath). Here's one of the poems we found beneath a charmingly pressed daffodil:

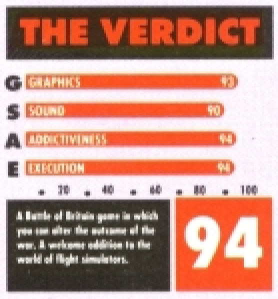
I wandered lonely as a cloud, But something was making a racket
It must have been the shotgun cartridges, Jangling around in my jacket.



Duncan MacDonald: We're not implying that Duncan's dippy or anything but it does sometimes appear as if he's inhabiting an ever so slightly different planet to the rest of us. Given a brilliant car-racing game to review, he'll choose to perform a 180° turn and head off in the opposite direction to the rest of the traffic: only to meet up with them again after half a lap causing the kind of carnage normally reserved for certain stretches of the M4 in heavy fog. Given a flight simulator, he'll destroy his own runway before heading North and deliberately fly straight into the side of a mountain. Actually, you know where we said that we weren't implying that Duncan was dippy? Well, we were lying. We are implying it. Some of Duncans bizarre 'out of tree' japes to follow next month.

WHAT'S WHAT

There's always somebody who doesn't understand the scoring system, isn't there? Oh no... it's not you is it?



There are four criteria to every game: **Graphics, Sound, Addictiveness and Execution** – and each of these is marked out of 100. The first three are pretty self-explanatory but Execution may need a tiny bit of illumination. Is there anything 'special' in the scrolling for instance? And are all the sections of the game tied together nicely, with a lot of obvious forethought on the part of the programmers? Well then, **Execution** will get highish marks. Mind you, there's a big **Overall Mark** which'll tell you about the game as a whole at a glance (but it isn't always a mean average).

A game which gets an overall score of 90 or above gets the coveted **ZERO HERO** award (which basically means 'buy it'). Separate from the Overall Score (but not unconnected to it) is the **HASSLE FACTOR**. Are there 400 disk changes every pico-second? Do you have to go through a boring title sequence before restarting? Things like that score here and they're marked out of 10. This figure doesn't alter the overall mark unless you want it to: it's up to you to do the subtracting if the problem outlined is one of your particular 'bête noirs'. Each review also contains a **WHAT'S WHAT** box which basically tells you, um, the price, format and release date).

Well, that's that for the main reviews anyway but let's not forget the others. Firstly there's the section called **SHORTS** which is just that: short. It's a page devoted to a fast stream of 'one line reviews'. And there's the **DEJA VU** section. Here you'll get reviews of new releases which aren't actually new at all (because they're already available on other machines). The **PRICE IS RIGHT** section is where you'll find the budget game reviews. They only get an overall score because they're crap. *(Because they're cheap actually. Ed.)*

review

THE LOST PATROL

Fancy taking a 60 mile hike through a Vietnamese jungle in war-torn 1966? No, neither did *Duncan MacDonald* or *Paul Lakin* but they had no choice. They were drafted and their first tour of duty was with *The Lost Patrol*, the new Cinemaware game from Ocean.



It's June 7th, 1966; a US helicopter returning troops from a period of rest and recreation in Saigon goes all wobbly and crashes in the remote Central Highlands of Vietnam. There are seven survivors, and the nearest US base, Du Hoc, is 57 miles away. 57 miles of unbelievably harsh terrain. 57 miles alive with booby traps and Vietcong troops. A fully equipped team of soldiers would find the prospect of a trek of this sort daunting (to say the very least) but the seven men who will be under your control have little food or ammunition. Oh, and morale is low, obviously. Your chances of survival are extremely slim. In fact it's worse than that: you're as good as dead. Here's where you stand...



Well, Gomez seems to be full of beans for some reason. Oh dear, Weaver doesn't. In fact he seems to be a mite pissed off. *(Maybe it's got something to do the fact that he's just been blown up by a mine. Ed.)*

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	The Lost Patrol
PUBLISHER	Ocean
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

THE SURVIVORS

This is your troop. Watch them carefully – some of them have certain strengths. Some of them have certain weaknesses. You don't want to send the cook into unarmed combat with 'a Geek' if there's someone available who's quite good at origami *(I think you mean Aikido. Ed.)*

SGT. Charles Weaver
US Residence: Springfield, Illinois.
STATUS: Height 5'9". Weight 153 pounds. 29 years old. Single. Two Years army service. Ten months in Vietnam on W.H.A.M. missions for intelligence. Decorated for valour during action in the An Loc Province during October 1964.

PTE. William Blom
US Residence: Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.
STATUS: Height 6'1". Weight 168 pounds. 24 years old. Married, one child. Six months active service in Vietnam. Aikido 2nd Dan.



God, this walking lark is tiring (yawn). Wonder if there's anywhere to snatch some kip?

PTE. Robert Case
US Residence: Columbus, Ohio.
STATUS: Height 5'11". Weight 147 pounds. 31 years old. Married, two children. Nine months active service in Vietnam.

PTE. Harvey Moore
US Residence: Fayetteville, North Carolina.
STATUS: 22 years old. Height 5'8". Weight 162 pounds. Single. Six months active service in Vietnam.

PTE. Richard Bachman
US Residence: Bangor, Maine.
STATUS: Height 5'10". Weight 161 pounds. 28 years old. Single. Fourteen months army service. Six months active in Vietnam. Highly proficient marksman.

PTE. David Cain
US Residence: West Liberty, Kentucky.
STATUS: Height 6'0". Weight 163 pounds. 27 years old. Single. Seven months active service in Vietnam.

PTE. Juan Gomez
US Residence: Montgomery, Texas.
STATUS: Height 5'6". Weight 132 pounds. 24 years old. Married, two children. Nine months active service in Vietnam.

PTE. Roy Castle
UK Residence: Richmond, Surrey.
STATUS: Height 5'9". Weight 138 pounds. 48 years old. Married, four children. Brand new draftee with no previous active service. Can play *The Flight Of The Bumble Bee* on the Alpine Horn. *(Are you quite sure about PTE. Roy Castle? Ed.)*





A The scene of the crash
B High ground
C Marshland
D Compass icon
E Message slot
F Grid icon
G Vietcong village
H Vietcong emplacement
I Du Hoc

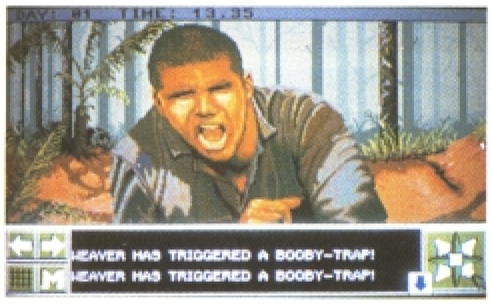
THE TERRAIN

This is where your route is planned and plotted. Familiarity with Vietcong war tactics and how to cope with the diverse terrain might help you. However, don't forget that the original 'Nam draftees weren't given any information. The only way they learnt was by experience – which meant (in so many cases) by getting themselves killed. You'll probably be doing the same – but at least you can have the luxury of a second bash.

This map screen is also where you check up on the morale of your men, where you choose to distribute rations (or to not distribute them – they're low remember) and, well, basically you give your orders and stuff from here.

The speed of your troop's progress can be changed by clicking on the centre of the compass icon (D). The direction in which you march (crawl, slope, hack or wade) is chosen by clicking on any one of the surrounding cardinal compass points. Your movements, as in real life, are slowed to varying degrees by the natural terrain features of the route you take – hills, rivers, swamp or jungle for example. There's the Control Panel Message Slot (E) to keep your eye on, which gives you quite detailed terrain descriptions once you've summoned up the grid icon (F) and highlighted the area you're interested in. The map, by the way, is two screens wide. And it's scrollable, so you can study it at your leisure.

The M icon takes you to the Team Morale screen, where not only will you get the individual morale and strength ratings but also details of injuries sustained. Clicking on the Lead icon chooses that member as the head of the team file as it moves across country. This means that he's going to be the first one to step on a mine or walk into a booby trap, so either choose someone you don't like or somebody who's proved himself to be observant and unflappable. Clicking on the scout icon allows you to select a 'pointman'. In fact you can appoint two. What these pointmen do is guard the flank of the file: checking for VC's creeping up the rear. *(Insert Julian Clary type joke here. Ed.)*



The menu bar at the top of the control panel (accessed by pressing the right mouse button) gives you access to a number of other options. 'Traps' allows you to leave booby traps in your wake. 'Food' allows you to alter the amount of rations to hand out. 'Rest' is something you'll need to do occasionally if you have casualties among the troop (rations can be consumed during these rests, and morale will be lifted, especially if you know any Paul Daniels 'party tricks'). 'Digging In' is something else you'll need to do – mainly at night. You can 'dig in' for multiples of one hour and like 'rest', you'll find it can be beneficial to strength and morale.

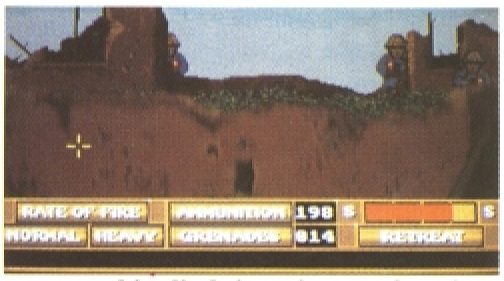
ONWARD MARCHING SOLDIERS

The Lost Patrol is made up of the main Map Screen and a host of sub-games: moving to a certain area on the map will plunge you into a small piece of arcade action. For instance, you might find yourself in a minefield which surrounds a Vietcong bunker. You can choose to retreat – but you might get spotted. Decide, instead, to push forwards and you're going to have to find a safe route through the mines. This is a viewed-from-above sequence against the clock. You control a crawling soldier (pick which of your team you feel best able to cope in this situation). The soldier can be turned through 360° and be made to probe the ground with his knife, which may (or may not) reveal a mine. If it does, well, you're not going to want to go that way, are you? No. You're not. (Unless you're incredibly thick.) So, it's a case of turning, probing again and when you find a safe spot, shuffling forwards. You mustn't hang around though, because at any point you could get seen by the VC and be overrun: um, which means getting mutilated and killed. But if you start panicking and move too fast, you might make a mistake and get your legs blown off – and the blast will be like a doorbell to the Vietcong anyway, saying "look over there. Some Americans to visit (and, um, mutilate and kill)".



Well, I'm meant to be probing for mines. Maybe I could just grab a quick forty winks.

Another of the arcade sequences takes a little bit of its inspiration from *Operation Wolf*, but instead of a continuously scrolling horizontal landscape, the action takes place on a single screen's worth with a vertically scrolling wall between you and the enemy. You find yourself pinned down inside ruined buildings by a VC force of unknown strength and size. Hidden behind the wall, you're safe from their bullets and grenades. Unfortunately, because you're behind the wall, you can't see them either – you have to poke your head up to take a shot or throw a



Hmmm, this ditch is quite comfy. Oh, hang on – we're being shot at.

> **VIETNAM WAR 'FACT'**
>
> **In the words of Paul Hardcastle's song, the average age of a soldier in Vietnam was nineteen (n-n-nineteen). According to Ocean's *The Lost Patrol*, the average soldier in Vietnam was twenty six (t-t-t-twenty six), single, with five sevenths of a child (f-f-f-five sevenths, f-f-f-f-) *(That's enough 'Paul Hardcastle' imitations. Ed.)***

grenade. And you know another word for 'a head poking up over a wall' don't you? That's right: 'a target'. Still, you can't sit down behind the wall indefinitely, because you'll find yourself getting overrun by the VC's.

HAND TO HAND COMBAT

At any point during the 'game' one of your scouts may stumble upon a Vietcong soldier guarding arms or supply bunkers. As total silence is imperative (you don't want to alert his 'chums' to your presence), you have to take him on hand to hand, which is another way of saying it's time for a bit of a side-on-view beat 'em up. You can punch and kick and, if you can get close enough, headbutt. However, time isn't on your side (as seems to be the case everywhere else in the game) and if you fail to report back to the group at the designated time, you'll be regarded as Missing In Action, and left behind to fend for yourself. Mind you, you may be killed by the VC before your time runs out anyway.



Don't you point your toilet parts at me, matey!

SNIPERS

Coming under fire from VC snipers isn't a barrel of laughs. You and your men are pinned down. All you can see are distant huts and trees and you hear the sporadic crack of rifle fire. Suddenly a message appears: "Private Case has been shot in the right arm". Oh dear, where are they shooting from? The trouble with snipers, you see, is that they're hidden. That's why they're called snipers. If they weren't hidden they'd be called 'sitting ducks'. So, it's time to use the telescopic sights on your rifle. Okay, scan the landscape dead slowly. Crack. Another shot. Phew, no-one's been hit. Scan more of the landscape. Crack. Hey, there was a tiny flash from that bush over there. It's sniper fire. Bang, bang, bang (go easy on the ammunition). There. Got him. Oh no, Private Case has been hit in the left leg. Retreating from snipers can be just as dangerous as facing them and trying to pick them off. It's just another of the many dilemmas you'll be facing.



It's the famous 'exploding hedge'.



Where you sell postcards? Me want buy postcard!

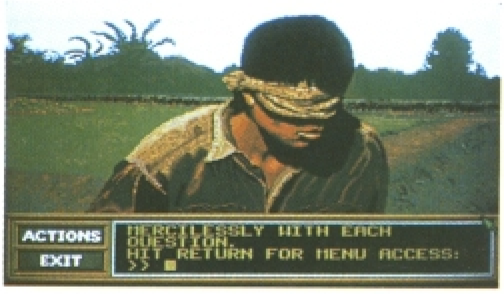
There's another sniper sequence in the game, in which you have to use hand grenades instead of your rifle. You pull the pin from the grenade, aim it with the cross hairs and set the power meter for what you think is the correct distance. This means you have five seconds to get the grenade aimed and launched – because you can't put the handle and pin back in again. If you take too long the grenade will go off in your hand, and it'll be frankfurters for tea.

INTERROGATION

On entering villages, you have to interrogate the inhabitants. This is done in the style of adventure games, with text descriptions and menu-driven multiple choice responses. You're placed in the unenviable position of not being able to trust anyone – the gentle looking old man in front of you could be just that: a gentle looking old man. However, he could also be a Vietcong sympathiser, holding information that will mean the difference between life and death for you and your men. This is where the real flavour of the Vietnam war starts to seep into the gameplay – have you been dehumanised by the carnage and destruction you've witnessed in the jungles and swamps? How will you conduct the interrogation? Will you play it softly, giving the old man the benefit of the doubt, and having a freindly game of noughts and crosses with him? Or will you get slightly rougher in your techniques, resorting to threats of physical violence and handing out the odd slap? Maybe you'll get seriously gung-ho and batter him about the head with a rifle butt until his skull goes all wibbly. You have the option to do all these things. Basically it's a question of how much you value the lives of potentially innocent people. This is set against your duty to get the men in your command back to safety. Role playing has never had such serious undertones. (Personally we'd set fire to his legs.)

Dunc: Hang on a mo, I want to tell you a story but first I've just got to put on my Vietnam soldier's voice. Ahem. Grunt, grunt. (Clears throat and tries to sound like a cross between Matt Dillon and Martin Sheen.)

"There we was, in a village, me and five of my men (Gomez had been blown apart in a VC trap the previous day). Morale was low, and there wasn't a helluvalot of food or ammo left. Two of the party had serious wounds and we still had 35 miles to go before hitting Du Hoc." Ahem. Grunt. (Gets normal voice back.) Um, sorry. Actually I'm not very good at being 'American', so I'll have another bash – this time as an English 'soldier'...



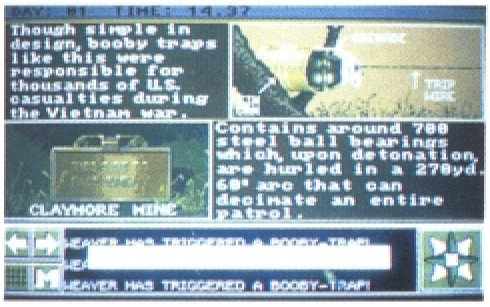
Okay, it's your turn to hide this time.

"Blimey. This is a rum old turn up for the books, I can blinking well tell you. The bally helicopter crashed and all seven of us were stuck in the middle of the Vietnamese jungle, without so much as a cricket bat to help us pass the time. We jolly well soldiered on though, on foot, and eventually made it to a charmingly picturesque village. (Um, except for Gomez that is, who got into a bit of a

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
A bit of disk swapping, but thankfully the game's worth the trouble.



scrape with some sort of landmine.) As I said, though, the village was wizard: wooden huts with hay on the roofs. The sergeant got hold of an old wrinkled farmer chappie and suggested we get some information from him. 'Oh good', I said, 'can you ask where I can buy some ethnic mantlepiece ornaments?' The sergeant told me that he was after information of a different kind, so I let him get on with it and went for a little walk. A few minutes later I stubbed my toe on something. It was a trapdoor, so I lifted it up – and found a hole in the ground full of



Corks. That top one looks even deadlier than the old 'ship in a bottle' routine.

people wearing funny hats and brandishing guns. 'Oh, how quaint, they're playing tunnels' I said, and asked them if I could join in – but they all jumped out and started firing. 'Hey, you can't shoot me, chaps', I said, 'I'm English', but they paid me no heed."

What *The Lost Patrol* is all about is atmosphere. And it scores. You feel tension with every step your party takes. You get a feeling of 'it's not fair'. You get a feeling of 'why do we have to be here?', but you are there, so you have to carry on. That's the intention. The war isn't glorified, but you're not allowed to play the pacifist humanitarian. Well, you are, but you'd be dead in about two pico-seconds. I could say 'first you do this, then you do that and then you do this and that and the other' but that would spoil the game. Anyway – 'the real soldiers in Vietnam weren't told what to expect, so why should you? What I will say, however, is that there's a certain 'random element' in the game. Luck. Just like real life.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	90
S	SOUND	84
A	ADDICTIVENESS	90
E	EXECUTION	85

A tense, exciting and thoroughly enjoyable game. Actually, let's replace 'thoroughly enjoyable' with 'utterly engrossing'.

88

Paul: In space no one can hear you scream. *(You're not in space, you're in the middle of war torn Vietnam. Ed.)* Well, this is certainly a rather different approach to war on computer. No shoot, shoot, shoot, kill, kill, kill, ha, ha, ha. It's far more thoughtful than that. In fact it's an 'anti-war' game, in a sort of Cinemaware fashion. That doesn't mean to say it's not violent. It is. Very. But the violence comes inside a different pill than most war games: it's slightly harder to swallow. From the very outset, the tension is there. You stare at the map screen, scrolling it around to check the terrain, and a bass heavy 'Nam war film type riff comes from the speakers. "Where would I be hiding" you ask yourself, "if I was a Vietcong foot soldier?". "Where wouldn't I expect to find a group of weary Americans?". On deciding on an area you think the VC's wouldn't expect you to be, it's a good idea to head for it. The trouble is that whenever you think the Vietcong won't suss something out, you're generally wrong – well, quite often. The tension can be a real killer. Still, what am I telling you this for? *The Lost Patrol* is a mission of discovery. You really have to learn as you go along, but just as in the real war, the cost of any mistakes can be very high. You can find two members of your party killed just because you stupidly didn't realise that... oh dear. There I go again, nearly letting the cat out of the bag. Actually, I wish I could have my first go all over again. Getting all seven of the company safely to Du Hoc on the very first play would be quite an achievement. As it happens, if this was real life I'd already be dead and wouldn't have another chance.

The graphics are superbly done, both in the static and arcade sections. Check out the black and white digitised film sequences: brilliant. And the interrogation screens are something else. (I really hate to say that I enjoy them, but you know what I mean.) No, no, I'm not going all gung-ho, what I mean is that they add to the game in a way that... Look, I don't actually 'enjoy' them, it's just that you find yourself in a real dilemma as to whether or not you... Oh, I give up. I'll just say that *The Lost Patrol*, as a whole, is even greater than the sum of its parts. *(Yes. And you liked the interrogation scenes in particular, didn't you? Ed.)*

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
Minor disk swapping blues. But it doesn't look like there was any way around it. Anyway, it's not that bad.



Just remeber kids war is not a game.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	91
S	SOUND	87
A	ADDICTIVENESS	90
E	EXECUTION	85

An atmospheric blend of tactics, arcade action and cunning rolled into one.

89

★ ★ GLOSSARY ★ ★

AK-47 – Assault rifle used by Viet Cong
Arrrggh – Soldier's signal meaning both his legs have been blown off
AWOL – Absent Without Official Leave
Charlie – Viet Cong (or a perfume from Lentheric.)
C-Rations – US Field rations
Didi Mau – Vietnamese for 'Go Away'
Diddy Man – One of Ken Dodd's little pals
Grunt – An infantryman
Greens – Army basic issue working/killing clothes
Hooch – Tent, or peasant hut
KIA – Killed In Action
Klick – Kilometre
M16 – Standard issue US assault rifle
Mama San – Any older Vietnamese woman
Medevac – Medical evacuation, usually by helicopter
NCO – Non Commissioned Officer: i.e. Sergeant
NVA – North Vietnamese Army
Ouuucch – Soldier's signal meaning his hand has been blown off
R and R – Rest and Recreation leave
RPG – Rocket Propelled Grenade
Tail-End Charlie – Last man in patrol
Viet Cong (VC) – Vietnamese Communist/Guerilla
WIA – Wounded In Action

STOP

PIPEMANIA

Ever since fixing his leaky old ball cock, *Paul Lakin* has fancied himself as a bit of a plumber; so we gave him a big plunger and sent him off to look at *Pipemania*...



WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Pipemania
PUBLISHER	Empire
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	End of February

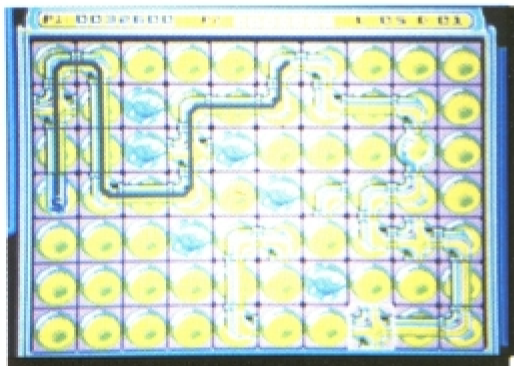
ZERO HERO

If you rang any of the New York striped shirt brigade during the last few months, chances are you wouldn't have had their full attention. While half their mind was on the conversation, the other half would probably have been on pipes; not the type stuffed with Old Shag and smelling like last weeks socks but the sort which carry water, courtesy of Empire's *Pipemania*. Under a different title and the auspices of Lucasfilms (who picked up on the game when Empire took it to last years CES show) this curious game has been selling by the lorry load in the United Mistakes of America.

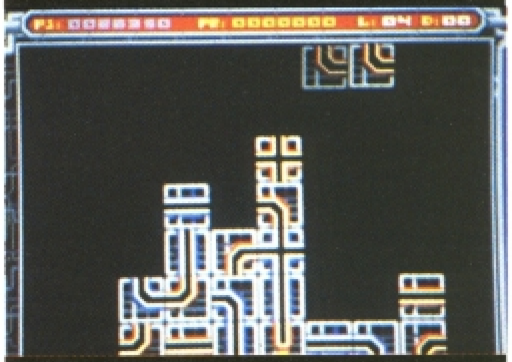
In that strange and greedy land *Pipemania* is seen as the latest in a long line of stress breakers for executives and others weighed down by the size of their incomes. Mind numbingly simple and mind bendingly addictive, *Pipemania* requires the player to connect a series of pipes together before someone turns the tap on and causes a nasty stain on the carpet.

Pipes come in a range of shapes and sizes, the order they arrive on screen selected at random by the computer. The only sure thing is that whatever the next pipe is, it won't be the one you hoped for.

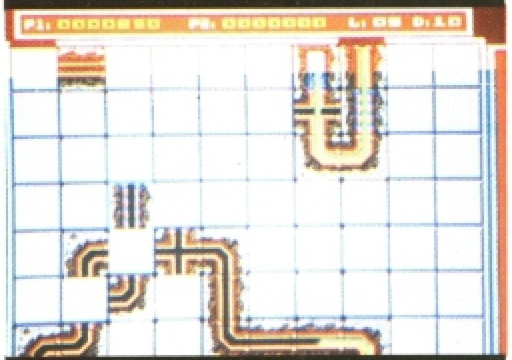
Soon to be available on virtually every computer in the universe – even the rare Venutian Waggle Wiongblaster 560 – *Pipemania* looks set to be the *Tetris* of the 90s.



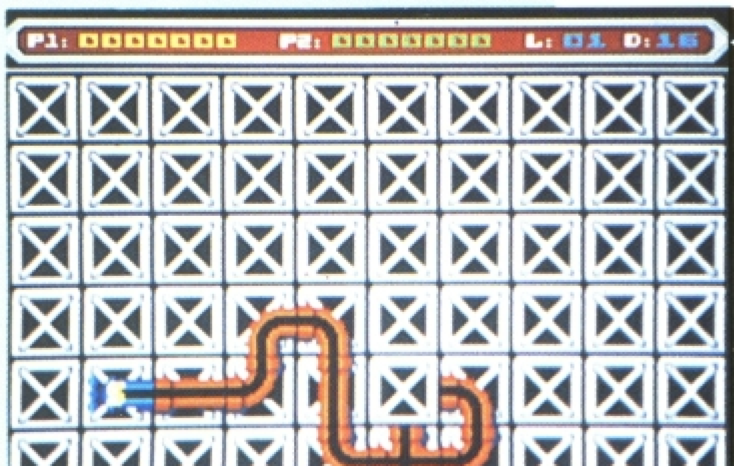
Yikes that curry's done something very odd to me plumbing!



Ooeer I don't think the guide deals with this bit until week 4.



Now darling don't worry. Think of the money we're saving.

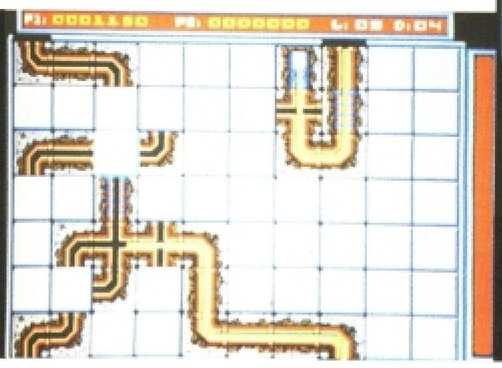


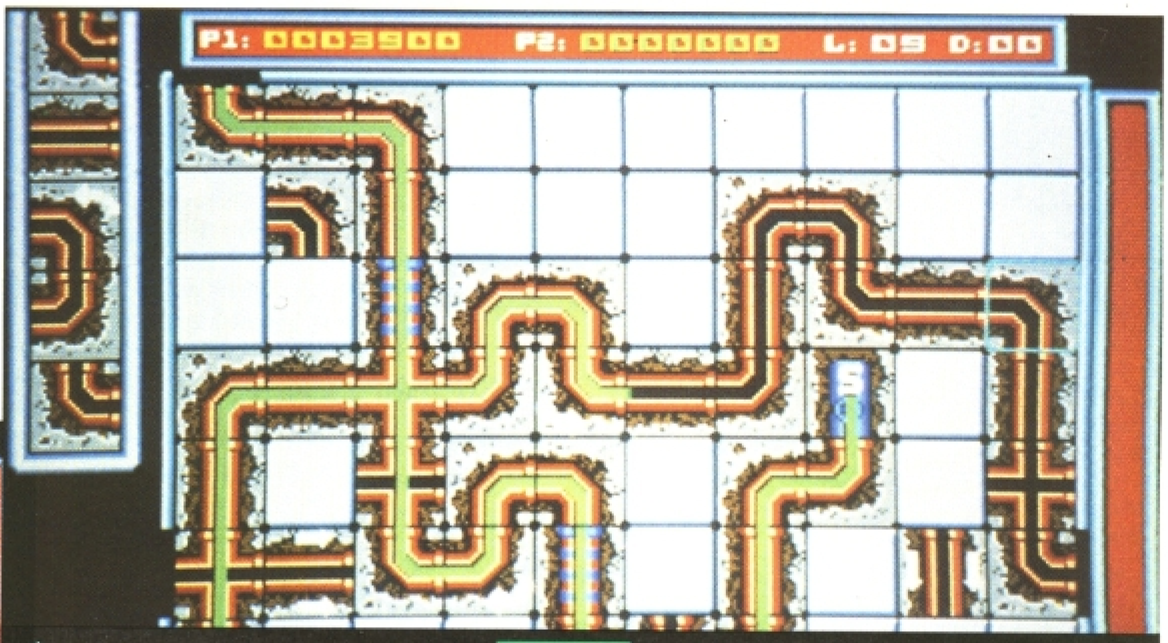
◀Hmm I've bought my 'DIY Guide to Plumbing' (part 2 free inside)

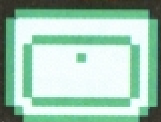
Well it all looks fairly simple in the diagram ... Oh dear.▶







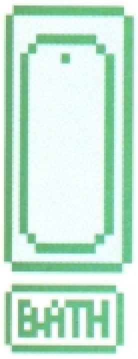




◀ Look dearest I gave you the double cross section copper pipe five minutes ago. You can't have lost it already.

▲ All done. Phew that's a relief. Now onto more important matters, where the devil is that packet of Exlax?





Paul: To be honest I wasn't exactly wild about doing this review. "It's a game about joining water pipes together," they said. "Great," I replied moving rapidly away. However, after Uncle Tim gently mentioned something called redundancy I agreed to give it a go.

Simplicity is the secret of this game. It's an absolute doddle to play. As pipes are displayed on the left hand side of the screen you have to take them and connect them to your developing water works. At the end of a time limit, water starts to flow and your plumbing work becomes somewhat more frantic. So if you haven't connected together a certain number of pipes by the time the water has reached the end of the system, then it's game over Brian and back to the Sewage Works.

From simple beginnings great complexities grow. (And great complexions too but that's another story.) The display on the side of the screen shows you what the next four pipes are going to be but does not allow you to change the order they come in. Like Chess, Draughts and all those other games that I'm really crap at, you're continually having to think a few moves ahead. You might see the piece you want but it's not coming up for another three turns. So what are you going to do with the other three pieces eh? Answer me that.

On the higher levels of the game, you not only have to connect up more pipes in less time but also have to deal with areas on the screen across which you can't build. (For some reason these are indicated by fish or fire hydrants; funny lot these programmer chappies, perhaps it's something in the water.) On the plus side it's possible to direct the water into reservoirs which delay the flow of water. To be honest all this does is give you just that little bit extra time to rip your hair out and scream "a left hand bend, what the hell do I want with a left hand bend?" People able to answer this have obviously got their lives under control.

Particularly tricky for those without 20/20 vision are the one way pipes. As the name suggests, these little beggars will only take water in the direction indicated by the arrow. You don't notice the arrow until one pico second before the water reaches the pipe. By then it's too late so you say "Oh dear, that's rather a pity" or words to that effect.

Those who find the game too easy could always check out the two player option where, as well as trying to build your own pipeline, you try and block your opponent's. The privatised water industry will presumably work along very much the same lines.

Although the game is basically very simple, it has some nice touches. The soundtrack adds nicely to the sense of panic, being vaguely reminiscent of the music in silent films. A useful feature is the code words, revealed at various stages of the game. Having discovered these, you can return to the game where you left off instead of ploughing through the first few levels again.

It goes against the grain to review a game without some criticism so let's have a look at the graphics. In the early levels they are about as interesting as could be hoped for. However in the later stages the choice of colours is a bit wayward. At times the mix of yellows, greens and other yucky shades of mellow make it rather difficult to see what's happening on the screen, especially those one way arrows.

However this apart, *Pipemania* is an excellent game that manages to be both puzzling and exciting. Very easy to play but very hard to let go. Buy this game and you may never sleep again. STOP

HASSLE FACTOR 0:
The only hassle is trying to beat the clock.

FASCINATING PIPE FACTS

1. Due to a misplaced decimal point, the French Water Company overestimated the amount of pipes they would need to renovate the Parisian Sewerage System by 5,000 pipes. The surplus pipes lay around for so long they became a landmark and were nicknamed the Pompidou Centre. *(Pompidou is French for surplus. Ed.)*

2. Pipe smoking was originally developed by the Red Indians as a form of portable smoke signal system.

3. Plans to build a Trans Alaskan Pipeline had to be scrapped when it proved impossible to develop a metal that wouldn't be corroded by coca cola.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	80
S	SOUND	78
A	ADDICTIVENESS	96
E	EXECUTION	92

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Brilliantly simple, simply brilliant.

92

TEAM YANKEE



Question: what is it everybody wants at the moment which rhymes with bank? That's right: a tank. Tank games are all the rage which is why we bunged *John Minson* in a BR half-track to march on Oxford Digital Enterprises early one morning...







The lush German land strewn with your dear little tanks.

DON'T CALL ME SHERMAN!

1 Cruising across the delightful German countryside, you meet up with some buddies from your unit. Each window has a command bar at the top to switch between its various options.

2 Status for each of the vehicles in a unit is shown as a simple bar graph. This is 'a good thing' as most soldiers are unbelievably stupid.

3 This small scale map still allows you to change the direction of a unit or alter its speed using the slide control. You can also zoom in to check on individual vehicles.

4 The icons at the bottom of the 3D view let you shift your viewpoint or arm yourself before you capture the comrades in your crosshair sight and blow them to kingdom come.

5 General commands such as surrendering or pausing the game are found to the right of the screen. Here there's also a timecheck and a scorecard for who's winning the war (in case you hadn't noticed), plus your current rank.



What's that bloomin' bird doing trilling away so early? Great Gatsby, it's the alarm. Oh-six-hundred hours. Time to get up and it's still dark. When they promised me a day out in the city of 'gleaming spires', nobody mentioned I had to be there by nine...

But never mind. Oxford conjures visions of cream teas in the quad, a mortar board on the head and a punt up the backs. *(Oo-err! – Anatomical Ed.)* Sorry, that's Cambridge. Oxford is the one what once turned me down. Some feeble excuse about them not doing a degree in woodwork.

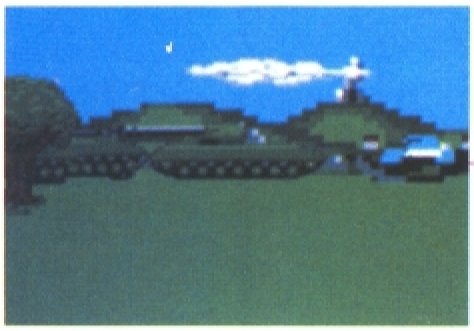
So much for Oxford. I'm being whisked away to a leafy suburb to be introduced to ODE, the team behind the *Team Yankee* tank strategy game. Only when we arrive however, after much hammering on the top secret door (cleverly marked Top Secret to discourage prying spies), nobody answers.

Marissa from Empire is on the verge of starting an international incident of her own when Dr David Pringle (aka The Doc) drives up. "You should have tried round the back," he smiles. And sure enough, there we find Richard 'Champie' Horrocks and Steven 'Steven' Green doing whatever programmers do at such an earthly hour. *(Sleeping? Ed.)* And at last it's time to drive my very own tank (obscure Stranglers song reference).

THE PLOT

It's the day after tomorrow – or maybe two days after tomorrow. Anyhow, it's pretty soon after tomorrow (*Get to the point. Ed.*) and those rotten Russians have just started World War III in Europe, which means Captain Sean Bannon and his crap... sorry – crack team of tanks have to save the free world from the red menace.

Team Yankee started life as a novel by Major Harold Coyle, who took time off from waiting for the balloon to go up to write a novel that would do for tank crews what Tom Clancy had done for submariners. Using General Sir John Hackett's scenario, outlined in his books *The Third World War* and *The Third World War: The Untold Story*, Coyle decided to concentrate his fiction on just one company of seventy-nine men with twenty-five million dollars worth of equipment. ("Quick – down the local used tank dealer to see how much we can get for it second hand!".)



Worra lorra... erm... tanks!

Over fourteen days, Sean Bannon (hunky name, huh?) and his team of loveable troops suffer the scars, the heartbreak, the joys and victories of war (continue in trailer-for-ITV-mini-series style ad infinitum) as they trundle around Western Europe avoiding all sorts of scrapes and destroying absolutely oodles of Ruskie tanks – though finding that East German Trabants are more than a match for heavy artillery!

It's fun, fun, fun until some high ranking Ivan launches a nuke at some unnamed British city. (Nominations to Harold Coyle c/o the US Army's crack Literary Division – motto: War is hell but best-sellers are more profitable.) Then we lob a few back at the Soviets before everybody takes a break for tea.

FROM PAGE TO SCREEN

Following its submarine success with *The Hunt For Red October*, ODE was on the look out for another campaign when one of its intelligence officers – who must remain nameless according to David Pringle – told them of a book which looked right up their street and for which the software rights were still available.

David immediately contacted the publisher, Presidio, a small firm specialising in military fiction, and obtained a copy. "It was perfect for computer conversion," he recalls. "It contains lots of maps and being a best seller in the States is also useful. Also it was a tank book. There aren't too many of those and tank simulations are in."

So David sent Presidio details of ODE's previous programs, playing up the *Red October* link and a game proposal for *Team Yankee*. "Unlike some of my game proposals it was fairly close to the end result," he laughs.

This outline contained a brief resumé of the parts of the book which were relevant to a computer game; obviously the human interaction had to go but the battles and scenarios were ideally suited to conversion. "Too many groups look for a good licence then worry about the conversion later," according to David. "I just pointed out that this was extremely good source material."

Presidio agreed and David Pringle got orders to roll. So work started on how to turn that source material into a game which would avoid the complexity of a full-scale tank simulation, concentrating instead on strategy and arcade elements. Meanwhile events were moving full speed ahead in the

ODE 'ERE (WHAT CAN THE MATTER BE?)

Dr David Pringle and myself have something in common. Apart from both being extremely handsome, wealthy and talented *(Don't restrain yourself. Ed.)*, we both started our computer careers with *Popular Computing Weekly* when it was published from a velly smelly room above a Chinese supermarket.

David wrote a fascinating column about programmable calculators which was inexplicably dropped after only six issues. Thereafter, we went on to far better things. Me to slaving for ZERO: David to owning his own software company. Where did he go wrong?

What a company he owns too. After a few – erhem – lesser known programs such as Creative Sparks' *Macbeth* *(You've seen the play, now play the game – W. Shakespeare.)* Oxford Digital Enterprises first shot to fame with its



The ODE team: Dr David Pringle, Steven Green and Richard 'Champie' Horrocks.

totally un-trivial adaptation of *Trivial Pursuit* for Domark, including machine specific and foreign language variants.

Next came Electric Dreams' *Titanic* (which sunk without trace – chortle, snarf) and Activision's *Sailing*, a simulation which suffered from a lack of scenery, excitement etc. though did at least initiate ODE's interest in first person perspective. After more *Trivia* and a quick *Blockbuster* complete with digitised Bob, ODE joined *The Hunt For Red October* with Grandslam.

With six full time members ("I'm just a part timer," says David. "I only do 21 hours a day; all the others do 24."), ODE was ready to expand and get involved in the actual publishing of the games. Which is what brought them to Empire. Following *Better Dead Than Alien* ("Better not call it a *Space Invaders* clone.") and *Sleeping Gods Lie* ("An epoch-making game which was confused with role-playing by many journalists.") plus work on a game for the Konix console ("No comment.") ODE was told about a book called *Team Yankee* (dot, dot, dot... now read on.)

TANK TOP TIPS



1 **In full screen you get a far prettier picture of the tanks. The blue one won't be in the final program; it's just waiting to have its details included. Not only do the filled 3D graphics look great, there are even shadow effects as they turn around! Crikey!**

2 **Additional aids to dealing death on the big screen are laser range finding, which will help tell you whether you're targetting a metallic object; infra-red imaging that you can use at night or in smoke, though all the tanks become blobs so they're difficult to distinguish; a binoculars facility to zoom in on the enemy; and engine smoke to provide a screen and generally pollute the atmosphere.**

3 **Your weaponry includes two types of shell – armour piercing and a normal explosive type; TOW guided missiles; a machine gun and smoke grenades. Beneath each is the number of shots remaining. This isn't an arcade game so you can't just fire at random.**



4 **You're able to zoom in on the big map so that instead of just seeing units you'll be able to identify individual tanks.**

5 **As well as the slide control, you'll be able to order an instant dead stop. Below this, the spade icon isn't to 'make your own little boy's room' but to dig in to a defensive position; not at all the place to get 'caught with your trousers down'.**

6 **The tank equivalent of *Come Dancing*, this elegant set of commands allows you to send each unit of four vehicles off in a pre-determined formation, thereby making pretty tracks all over the fields.**

world outside. Suddenly tank games were really in vogue and Harold Coyle had become a best-selling author. ODE had a very, very hot property on its hands.

"At Chicago CES *(Consumer Electronic Show – Initials Ed.)* last year, American groups were running around trying to buy the rights from us for reasonable sums of money," recalls David. Wisely he held on though and now has a complete game which is causing considerable interest among American publishers – including some who already have tank simulators. It seems the public just can't get enough of the Abrams M-1.

THE GAME DESIGN

The American market is very important to us," David continues. "But the game is being designed not in the traditional way that an American group would design a game like this, with a keyboard overlay and a fifty page manual. It's done with a mouse-icon interface so it's not got loads of key presses which we find frustrating.

"It's important that you see a view that looks realistic. But we've gone for icons that represent what things are supposed to do rather than looking like the inside of a tank. It's the sort of game you should be able to pick up and play, then read the manual when you get stuck."

Decisions such as these were made at the first discussion meetings back in March 1989, attended by David, Steven, Champie and the mysterious secret agent, who has helped research some of the tanks' technical details. Getting the fundamentals right took four months and fine tuning continues right up to the final stages. As work progressed, graphics designer Kevin Ayre was brought into the team to capture the unique charms of the German countryside. Don't neglect to do a spot of sightseeing before you alter the horizon with your heavy artillery!

"In designing a tank game it's a question of knowing which are the important parameters and which are not. Do you assign each Russian tank a factor for morale and the like? If you do and have 50 of them, it ends up very slow. Or you can have it fast but with a thick opponent," David explains.

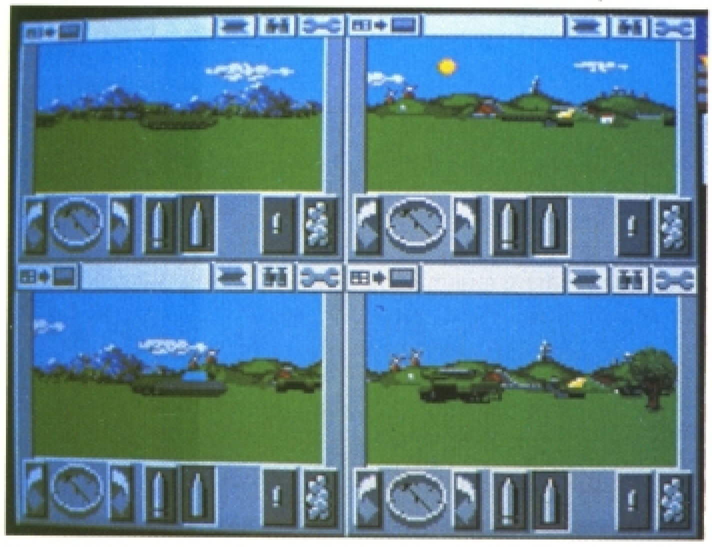
A compromise had to be reached. "You have to think of how the opposition will behave. If it's in a unit with five others and you've just destroyed three of them, will it retreat or come at you kamikaze style, which is a bit of a Russian tactic?"

THE GAMEPLAY

Sticking close to its inspiration, *Team Yankee* puts you in charge of just four units, each containing four vehicles, though as you're part of a mechanized infantry battalion they're not all tanks but include armoured personnel

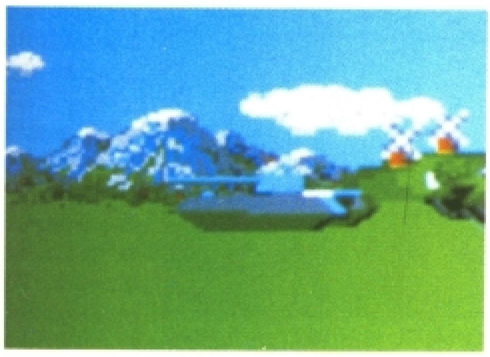
carriers and TOW vehicles. *(Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided anti-tank missile – Military Initials Ed.)* Each type of vehicle has its own characteristics, so you'll have to deploy them to their best advantage. For example, the TOWs are less manoeuvrable than the M-1s but their missiles are invaluable.

To keep an eye on all this action, the display presents you with four mini-screens, each containing a view from an average position among each unit's vehicles. That lets you send units off in totally different directions and still keep track of what's happening. If you want to concentrate on one particular part of the action though, you can fill the screen with a single unit's display. You can also flip between the 3D tank commander eye-level to a map screen or a status display. In all three instances, the full-screen display gives you a greater selection of commands or more information.



One click and you can watch all your babies at once.

All this will be preceded by a briefing session which is another way of helping the novice player get straight into the game. Apart from allowing you to choose levels of difficulty and from different scenarios, such as holding a position or providing escort duty, it will tell you whether you can request artillery support to soften up the enemy. There should even be a practice mode to let



Take your partners, one, two, three.

you try things out before battle commences.

The command system makes driving a tank even easier than nuking a city. You just click on the correct icons and away you go, trundling across hill and dale until you catch sight of some Russian T-55s, T-62s or even a London Transport W7 (well, they're red too). Then you click on your choice of weapon, sight up the enemy with your cross-hairs (and mathematical muddles such as parabolic projection is ignored so you can shoot straight at the opposition) and fire away.

It all sounds so simple. But remember one thing – the fate of the free world lies in your hands!

THE TECHNICAL BIT

Team Yankee is the first game Steven and Champie have written entirely in machine code. "We previously used C," says Steven, "which made PC conversions easier."

Keeping all four units operating independently created no particular problems. "The program treats each one at a time," says Champie. "It's not too bad as it's not intended to be a really fast-paced type of game." Certainly there's no feeling of things dragging in the demo version I was shown.

The 3D views were a bit more difficult to achieve than usual because they had to operate at both quarter and full-screen size. This made the use of hard-wire constants to calculate the co-ordinates impossible. To put it another way, a game like *Starglider* can store the size of every object and just shift that. But in *Team Yankee* each object has two basic sizes, depending on which view is used.

The fine tuning of the Ruskies: strength is still being worked on but Champie reckons they'll be 30 enemy tanks in the toughest situations and five different scenarios based on events in the novel. Game saving is another area to be finalised by ODE who want to avoid having to type in file names and other such complexities. The game will use manual protection, to enable you to copy the game and save your status to disk.

Right. Those are your orders. Don't bother to say t'anks. Just prepare to join the Team, Yankee. STOP

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Team Yankee
PUBLISHER	Empire
PRICE	Probably £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Late March

THE PROGRAMMERS

Steven Green's dedication to the ST and Richard 'Champie' Horrocks' affection for the Amiga isn't the only difference between the programmers of *Team Yankee*. Steven is quiet, with a machine running his ST bulletin board on his desk (*My Little Phoney*, 0865 773277, up to 24000 baud and other computer owners can play if they dare; plug, plug). Champie is more outgoing and shares his workspace with an electric guitar. Together though they produce code which once written will be united into a single game.

Steven and Champie joined ODE four years ago, just in time to work on *Trivial Pursuit*. Prior to that, Steven had worked freelance producing games for the Spectrum (ho-hum) the Oric (ho, ho) and the Jupiter Ace. (Some hope! The Ace was the world's oddest computer – official – offering Forth instead of Basic.) He also produced music for Elite and Alligata to use in various games.



And it's all t'anks to them.

Champie claims, "I hadn't done anything before joining ODE." A former Oxford maths graduate (Two plus two? "Hang on, I've got my calculator somewhere.") his first published effort was a *Your Sinclair* cover mounted game called *Go Bear Go*. With an illustrous start like that, no wonder he became famous. His search for post-varsity employment brought him to ODE and *Reach For The Moon*, an ill-fated collaboration with Magnetic Scrolls which failed to blast off.

Fortunately recent efforts have met with more success and now Champie and Steven work closely as a team. But doesn't it cause problems, each developing on different machines? "We still develop together, not independently," says Steven. "The code should work on any 6800 machine. Champie is doing the strategy and movement and I'm doing the displays and user interfaces. For the strategy it doesn't matter what machine it's on. It's just manipulating data. And even the display doesn't really matter till you get down to the low level."

Amiga users already groaning at the thought of yet another game which fails to make use of the micro's superior features can rest easy. *Team Yankee* uses the blitter to draw polygons and sprites which helps to counteract the slightly slower processor speed. "Hopefully it'll be the same game on both machines," says Champie.

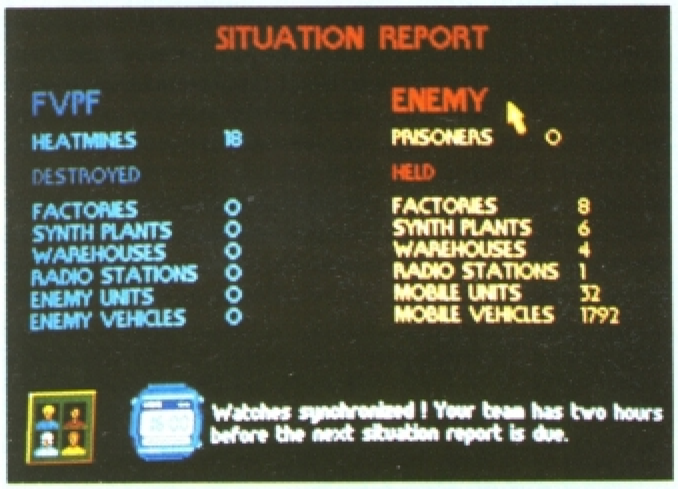
MIDWINTER

ZERO HERO

Everyone knows about *Midwinter*. Well, it's hardly sneaked up on us, has it? Anyway, it's finally here and seeing as it's cold, big and difficult, we sent *Sean Kelly* to review it...



1. Access the map screen. 2. Access all the things which Professor Kristiansen can do. 3. Access the team screen 4, 5. Check out more details on Kristiansen. 6. Movement. Bit obvious this one, isn't it? Stupid.



A progress report is accessible after every two hours of gameplay, to let you know how dismally you are doing.

Blimey! Where to start? *(Try the beginning. Ed.)* Oh. Okay. First there was God, then he made Adam and Eve... Cut to several epochs later and we find ourselves about 100 years on from the present day. But somehow things aren't quite right.

It would seem that the planet has got in the way of a meteorite shower and this has caused yet another ice age to make the world a whole lot colder and put Indesit Frigidaires out of business. The only inhabitable reigions are to be found around the equator, though even here it's pretty brassy. And even the Azores, where *Midwinter* is set, are covered with snowy mountains and the like.

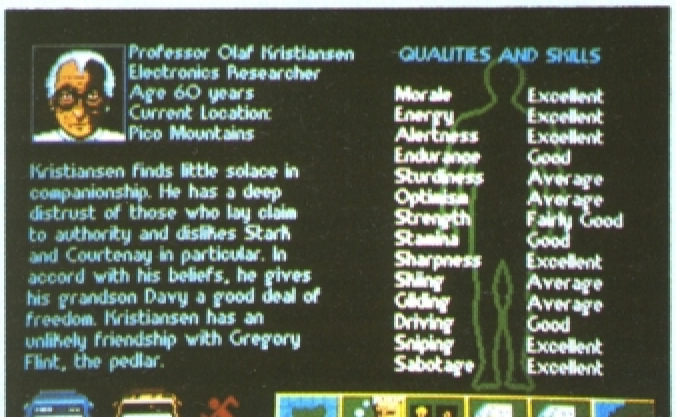


All the details on Virginia Caygill, the ski instructor (-ess?). Doubtless other mags will cast aspersions for cheap laughs. We won't, merely noting that it's about time she did her roots.

The inhabitants are basically a peace-loving lot but unfortunately the bottom right hand corner of the isles (I'm sure there's a proper geographical term for this, but not being enlightened I don't know it) is occupied by... dan dan daah... the bad guy. Tall, bearded and balding, General Masters wants to be general master of the whole island. Perhaps if his parents had christened him 'Pleasant Peace Loving Chappie Perfectly Happy Tending His Allotment Masters' there wouldn't be all these problems. Still, I suppose his parents probably didn't know any better.

Masters has sent battalions of his soldiers out to conquer the rest of the island, preferring – like most generals – to stay in the southern headquarters. The cad. The game begins about half an hour after the hordes have begun to move northwards. At this stage, you are only controlling the actions of one Captain Stark, formerly Managing Director of the Azores Tourist Board but now leader of the 'Free Villagers Peace Force' since the tourist board went bust. Up until now the whole thing has been a hobby, with his biggest worry being chilblains from too many snowball fights.

Captain Stark (or 'Starkers' to his mates, following a rather saucy incident at a notorious fondue party) must now recruit the 32 islanders in order to carry out a guerilla war against Master's marauders. Once another



All the details on Professor Kristiansen. As with all the other characters, he's probably got some serious 'soap opera' type problem lurking just beneath the surface. Let's see... Hmmm... Friendly with the tinker, eh?



person is recruited, you also control their actions. Unfortunately, Starkers has to do this on foot to start with and as the islands cover an area of 400 square miles, it's a mite troublesome to say the least. There are snow buggies, cable cars and hang gliders which can be used to get around, but these must be found before they can be used.

Fortunately a map is available, which as well as indicating the condition of the terrain will also tell you where the other islanders are, where the enemy is and where all the cable cars, radio stations, villages etc. can be found. So basically the order of play is thus: trog around contacting villagers and converting them to your cause and once you feel you have a big enough force, decide on a strategy and lead the gullible few into battle against the well armed many.

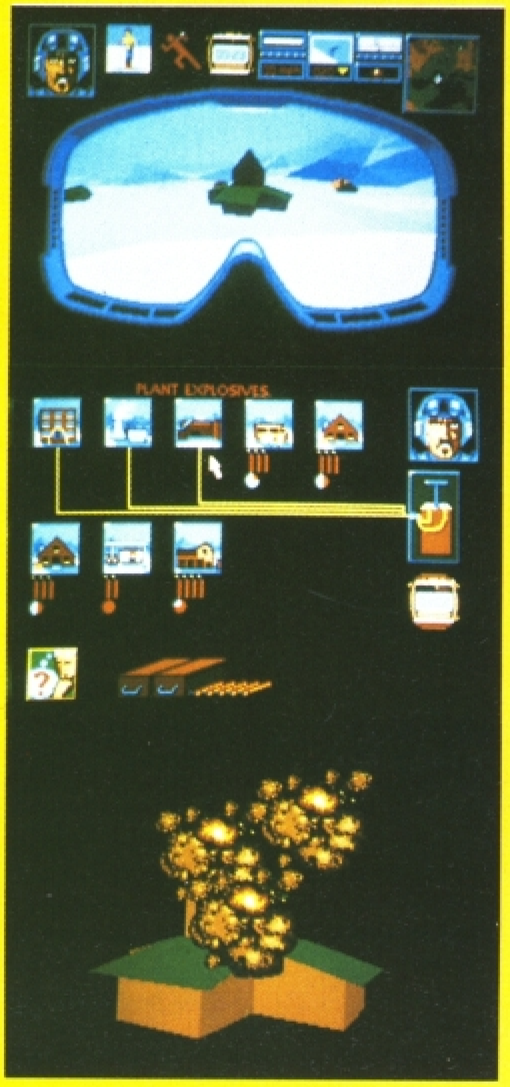
Some of the villagers don't particularly like Stark (the fondue party again) and will refuse to join the force if he tries to recruit them. So, other members of the group with a similar or 'compatible' nature should be sent to attract them to the cause. (That means using a girlie to recruit the macho prats.) You control each of the team members in turn for a two hour game period. While you're moving Stark, for example, from one mountain to the next to prepare for an all out assault, the 'clocks' of the other characters don't alter. This means it doesn't take you 10 game hours to move five players as each of the five are moved through the same two hours in turn.

On the face of it, *Midwinter* is a strategy game but despite these profound strategy elements, it also has an 'arcadey' feel. Getting round is done 'in person' as it were and can mean skiing round dodging bombs and sniping at bombers, hang gliding over mountains and lakes or racing snow buggies across dangerous terrain at full pelt.

Only you stand between Masters and the Azores. And just think, once you've given him a good old kicking, all the people will trust you and you could even set yourself up as leader. Become a dictator... Think of all that power... HAHAHAHAHA!!!!! *(Somebody give him his pills. Ed.)*

WHAT'S WHAT

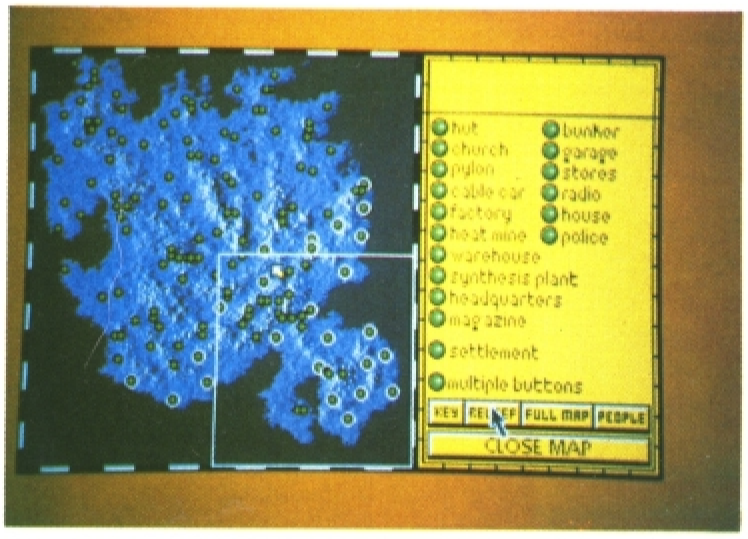
TITLE	Midwinter
PUBLISHER	Rainbird
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	ST: March Amiga/PC: probably April



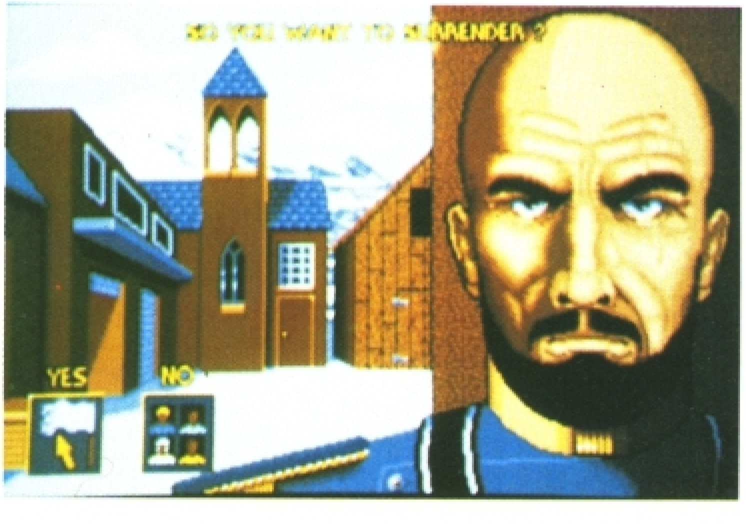
One of your team has managed sneakily to approach the enemy HQ and now wants to let Masters know that he's here.

Let's go for the more subtle methods of announcing our presence – we'll blow up every building within a 50 mile radius.

The result? Well let's just say that Masters got a hell of a surprise when he pulled the chain this particular morning.



The invaluable map screen, from which oodles of invaluable information can be accessed. Pointing to any of the buildings etc. on the right will highlight them on the map.



No way. Did Winston Churchill ever give in? Did Bonnie Prince Charlie? Eh? Eh? Oh go on then, yes. Anything for a quiet life.

KRISTIANSEN GOES HANG-GLIDING



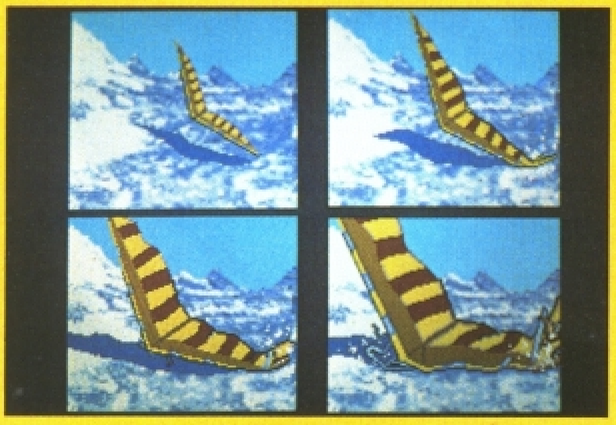
Lesson one: "Firstly you are gettings yourself a stripey hang-glidery thing and then you are findings a high mountains. Then you run off the side, rememberings to put on the hang-glidery."



"Havings jumpied off the high mountains, it's good to not crashy bang into it. I'm not doings very well at vis bit."



"Aaah. A village. Now all we are needings to be doings is landings..."



"As you can see, I'm not doings brilliantly good at vis... how you say... malarkey. Oh deary me..."



The Team! Yo! You think they'd come up with something a little more 'happening' than 'The Team' wouldn't you? I mean, how about The Azores Anarchists'? Or 'Rude Boys of the Equator'? Or something like that. And how come two of the team were playing *Speedball* when it all began?

PC

Sean: *Midwinter* is totally fab. There's no doubt about it; even at this early stage of the year, it's already going to be very difficult to beat in the 'game of the year' stakes.

Firstly, the whole scenario has obviously been thoughtfully researched and is altogether feasible and believable – convincing even. The way in which the game evolves as you play it should keep everyone coming back time after time.

The graphics are excellent throughout. Firstly, the stationary screens are all beautifully put together. They have a cohesive and distinctive design and all the icons are self-explanatory. Similarly, the various screen layouts are colourfully and imaginatively presented. This is just the stationary stuff though and it's the animated graphics, namely the mountains, cable cars and buildings, that really make the chin drop. The presentation and the speed with which they update is impressive. The way in which the mountains emerge from the mist to give the impression of distance is also innovative and convincing. There has also been a tremendous amount of effort put into making things just right, for example the little rise and bump as the cable car goes over a support tower.

Unfortunately, sound is not particularly stunning, the effects for the most part sounding like various intensities of white noise. There are some nice touches though: when you turn to face a vehicle that's chasing you, the sound increases in volume.

Giving every characters a history is a good idea in theory but I did feel that the type of problems and two-dimensional characteristics they all had (the lech, the hermit, the nurse with a crush on the leader) made it seem like a bad soap opera and cliched beyond words.

However, gameplay-wise, *Midwinter* is fantastic. It's absolutely enormous but unlike the type of game where you have to spend the first few days just walking around finding out where things are, the map screens give you all the information you need to know. This means that as soon as you begin playing you feel that you are really involved, instead of just tramping around before the real game starts. You can get straight down to planning a strategy and recruiting a team and although in the first few games you'll probably lose spectactularly, at least you feel you're doing it with a purpose and learning some decent tactics along the way.

Moving round is also great fun, hacking off the side of mountains with nothing but a hang glider and three crates of dynamite for company. All the vehicles, whether gliding, skiing or zipping across the snow at a fair old rate are brilliant fun to drive.

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
A bit of disk faffing, but nothing that's too unbearable.

Before the review, I was given the mathematical tripe about fractals and ten billion operations per second and all the usual sort of stuff that software houses wheel out when they're trying to convince you that you should like a game because it's clever. Normally this is worrying, 'cause clever games tend to lack decent gameplay. *Midwinter* has convinced me for the first time ever that a game can be really clever and incredibly playable. It's an absolutely phenomenal game and there are no reasons not to buy it. Absolutely stunning. STOP

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	93
S	SOUND	75
A	ADDICTIVENESS	95
E	EXECUTION	93

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Original and addictive game from Maelstrom. I can't recommend it too strongly.

94


SPACE HARRIER II ™
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SPECTRUM
AMIGA
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SPACE HARRIER II

Remember *Space Harrier*? *Duncan MacDonald* did, with a sort of warm nostalgic feeling that made his toes go all wibbly. So who better to check out *Space Harrier II*, the sequel from Grandslam? Actually we could think of several people, but Duncan did it anyway.



Ha, got him with my nuclear powered polo.

Space Harrier. Now there's a rather famous coin-op 'blast from the past' for you. One of the first games to hurl the player about on a hydraulically powered chair as he shot everything up on-screen, *Space Harrier* was also one of the first arcade machines to find itself surrounded by a throng of onlookers. Fighting often broke out as the crowd jostled for position, with everyone trying to push in at the front of the queue, and in one incident 48 people were actually killed in an amusement centre on Brighton sea-front. *(Are you sure about that last bit? Ed.)*

Then along came *Space Harrier II*. Luckily, this sequel wasn't responsible for any deaths – the reason being that while it was better than the original, the excitement and wonder had, for most people, gone out of hydraulic cabinets.

In the original *Space Harrier* you had to save Dragon Land. In *Space Harrier II* you have to save Fantasy Land. This time around your ultimate aim is to kill the Dark Harrier, who you only get to meet at the very end of the last level: an obvious place really, because if you met him in the middle of level three (and killed him) there wouldn't be much point going on. Anyway, *Space Harrier II* contains twelve levels in all. Then there's a thirteenth 'special' level in which you have to take on all the game's meganasties in succession, culminating, if you succeed, in the 'ultimate battle' with the Dark Harrier geezer.

Space Harrier is the character you control, not suprisingly. We'll assume Space is his christian name and Harrier his surname, and, to be polite, we'll refer to him as Mr. Harrier. Mr. Harrier has a jetpack on his back which means that as well as running along the ground he can also skip into the air and fly around all over the shop. You view him from behind – and all the in-game scenery and aliens scroll 'out of' the screen in pseudo 3-D. Shooting things is the name of the game in *Space Harrier II* – unless they're unshootable, in which case, um, avoiding them is the name of the game.


Splat. Blat. Kerpow. Missed!

There's a whole load of different sets of aliens on the rampage, all with their own attack formations, in addition to the giant pillars. These pillars move towards you at breakneck speed and have to be avoided, but there's no point trying to fly over them as they're too high. Sometimes both the attacking aliens and the pillars appear on screen at the same time, which makes life rather hard. (And getting killed rather easy.) At the end of each level there's the obligatory meganasty.

At various points during the game you get to partake in a bonus level, where the action is much the same as in the main game, but you're not playing for points – you're playing for prizes – extra lives. And that's it. Yer lot. Not much else to say, really, except it's out on the ST, and we've got a copy. Is it any good? Well, read on and find out.



Cripes, I'll never get the hang of American Football.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Space Harrier II
PUBLISHER	Grandslam
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now



Now, now, don't lose your head.

Dunc: Alright, you can see the stationary graphics – but you want more, don't you. How well do they move, that's the question dribbling out of the left side of your mouth along with all that saliva, isn't it? Well, I can hereby confirm that they don't actually move at all: they just sit there doing nothing. This is a new concept called a 'stationary shoot'em-up'. No, actually that was just a sort of joke. *(It wasn't a very good one. Ed.)* Truth be told, everything moves incredibly fast. Mind you, it has to be said that while the animation on the sprites is rapid, it's also slightly jerky: speed at the expense of smoothness.

Maybe the jerkiness is down to memory constraints though, as the sprites are really big and colourful throughout, especially the end of level monsters. What 'muthas' they are – from funny GoBot type robot things with stompy feet to gargantuan turtles with three heads to – well, there are twelve in all, and that's only two of them.

They zoom around all over the place and fire incessantly. There's always a logical way to kill them though, so the learning curve is quite a friendly one (well, not actually 'friendly', but you know what I mean). The sound effects, by the way, are reasonable – but not particularly awe inspiring. Oh, and there's an option for mouse control which gives you yet another excuse for buying a ZERO mouse mat (the best mouse mat in the world)..

At the end of the day, I'm going to have to say that *Space Harrier II* isn't dramatically different to its prequel. A lot of detail has gone into the sprite graphics, but the jerkiness of the animation is slightly off putting – at first. Once you 'get into' the game you don't notice it so much, though.

Hmmmm. Yes. As a prime piece of shoot' em up action, *Space Harrier II* has got quite a lot going for it. Though I've got a feeling some of you might have been expecting it to be even better.



Oeer, they're running rings around me.

THE VERDICT

		Score
G	GRAPHICS	86
S	SOUND	82
A	ADDICTIVENESS	86
E	EXECUTION	83

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Fast paced first person perspective 3D scrolling shoot 'em up. Shame about the slightly jerky nature of the graphics.

85

REALLY TRUE HARRIER FACTS



THE RED HARRIER

Found only in the Norfolk Broads this strange bird lives entirely on the dung left by Marsh Chickens. For this reason the bird has a very distinctive, and fairly repulsive, aroma. One Red Harrier is reputed to have lived to the age of fifty by which time it could be smelt from a distance of 1.6 miles.



BAe HARRIER

The Harrier jump jet is the most famous VTOL (Vertical Take Off And Landing) to have seen service with the RAF. Its Pegasus vectored-thrust turbofan engines were a considerable edvance on the biro spring and old knicker elastic used by Mr Stanley Sproggitt to power the Mk I prototype. This version managed an immaculate take off on June 5 1953. Tragically Mr Sproggitt proved unable to land and was last seen heading in the direction of Cleethorpes.



THE HECKMONDWIKE HARRIERS

One of the most famous teams in the history of amateur athletics, the 'Harriers', dominated track events between the wars. To this day townsfolk speak with pride of names such as "Speedy" Parker, "Kneecaps" Noddishall and, of course, the legendary Ian "Sheep worrier" Arnford (seen here training with a large rugger ball type melon). Any visit to Heckmondwike would be incomplete without a sightseeing trip to the Bagshaw Pavillion inside which Speedy's surgical truss can still be seen; a yellowing reminder of a nobler age.

STOP

review

FULL METAL PLANETE

Blimey! It's another one of those weird French games again. This time it's a conversion of a board game that people in Paris sit around playing all day in 'les publeek 'owses'. *Sean Kelly* put on his beret to check it out.





Full Metal Planete **is a strange game. The main objective is to land on a planet which is full of metal ore, grab as much as possible and then leg it pronto. With up to three other greedy teams trying to grab the ore, it's not exactly a stroll round the terra firma grabbing chunks of tin. Each of the players, which can be any mix of computers or humans up to a maximum of four players, takes it in turn to make a move.**

Your first move is to choose a landing sight for your freighter, the second to deploy your forces and the third is when the fun starts. Your forces consist of a number of tanks, a tanker, two ships, a crab and a weather hen. The tanks and boats are purely offensive or defensive, whilst the tanker, crab and weather hen can all carry ore. The tanker can carry four chunks of ore, the crab and weather hen two. The weather hen is capable of transforming ore into a tank, crab or pontoon.

The game consists of a maximum of 25 turns for each of the players. There is a time limit of three minutes to make your move, consisting of 15 'operation points'. The game is played on one of those hexagonal board designs and movement of anything across one square will cost one operational point, as will loading ore or unloading other crafts. Your points can be spent in several ways: putting your tanks in a better position, loading or converting ore or even attacking other teams of miners.

So, is *Full Metal Plante* a load of ore'ld tat or as good as gold?



Aha, one more devilish move will leave my opponent orestruck.



Think I'll go for a tank this time. I don't fancy the crabs much.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Full Metal Planete
PUBLISHER	Infogrames
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	ST/Amiga now PC later

AMIGA

Sean: It's really hard to pinpoint the attraction of *Full Metal Planete*. The first game I played was against just one other computer-controlled opponent and was, quite frankly, pretty dull. For the second, however, I made sure I had three computer-controlled opponents and it was here that the game really started to hot up.

The graphics are an accurate translation of the board game with that little bit extra thrown in, for example when you blow someone up or move around the board. All the menus are well presented and there are tons of options to choose from. Sound is essentially a collection of metallic clanky noises, with a chunk of music at the beginning. Nothing spectacular but perfectly suitable for the occasion.

In the initial stages you spend most of the time just placing your forces to the best possible advantage and possibly using your weather hen to create a few more tanks and crabs to expand your empire. From then on it's a case of fending off the attacks of the other miners as they attempt to muscle in on the ore near you, setting out to steal their ore or bashing them. Attacking or even capturing the vessels of other miners, involves a considerable amount of thought and organisation and adds to the fun. But strangely enough, it's a lot more satisfying when you have to plan just exactly how you're going to blow someone up, than simply hacking them down with a machine gun. It's also much more frustrating when someone else attacks you in a really obvious way that you hadn't noticed. Bit like chess in that respect, I suppose.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Perfectly user-friendly. No faffing about.

As I've already mentioned, I wasn't too impressed with *Full Metal Planete* at first. A few hours play, however and I was well and truly hooked. It's basically a strategy game, but it's so well presented that even the hardest of arcade nuts should find the game appealing. The limit of 25 turns per game stops it getting boring and does give some urgency to the proceedings. Just as soon as I have finished writing this review, I shall probably go back to the computer and have another quick go (*And another go. Ed.*) – with a view to taking the screenshots, you understand – and I can think of no better accolade for a game. STOP

GRAPHICS 88	ADDICTIVENESS 91	OVERALL 88	
SOUND 70	EXECUTION 90		

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CONSOLE ACTION

INSIDE

Super Nintendo hanging on

Supplier for Super Graphx confirmed

Sega games to look forward to

Colour Nintendo Game Boy planned

Three great new Lynx launches: California Games, Electro Cop, Gates Of Zendacon

Neutopia RPG for the Engine

Plus news, reviews, tips and cheats

PC ENGINE SUPER GRAPHX

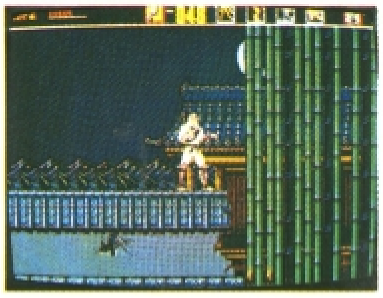




The PC Engine Super Graphx steams into the 1990s

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QUICKIES

The Gameboy hasn't even officially made it to our shores and already its makers, Nintendo, are touting a colour version. Atari and Nintendo are embroiled in several bitter lawsuits in the States, so it wouldn't be uncharacteristic of Nintendo to try and steal the Lynx's thunder by announcing a machine with similar capabilities.

Next time you pop into your local Sega stockist, look out for the Handle Controller (awful name). It's a yoke (I'm not yoking!) which plugs into the Sega console and provides you with an ideal controller for car racing games and flight simulations.

A console from Commodore? Well that's what's doing the rounds on the grapevine – but then there's been speculation that Commodore would release a console ever since Atari announced they would be releasing one (that's in addition to the Lynx). Stay tuned for more news.

The Sega Megadrive (aka Genesis) is reputed to be outselling the PC Engine (aka Turbo Graphix) in the States – in fact, demand for the machine is so great that Sega Japan have gone ahead and shown off a disk drive, graphics tablet and keyboard for the console. If the keyboard and disk drive take off, the ST and Amiga are in for a really rough ride.

SUPER NINTENDO ON HOLD

With so many consoles about to be launched, Nintendo have decided to hold back on the Super. They want to see what everyone else produces before blowing the competition out of the water. The problem is, they could wait forever.

With the current 8-bit Nintendo it's possible to select 4 colours from a palette of 52 with 4 of these colour groupings on screen. The Super Nintendo that was supposed to be released in Japan last July sports 16 colours from a possible 32,768 on screen – 8 palettes are supported. Another mode makes it possible to have 256 colours on screen. Add to that a resolution of 512 pixels x 448 and you end up with something rather special.

Up to 128 sprites can be animated, sized between 8 x 8 pixels and 64 x 64 pixels. Other hardware screen tricks include rotations and zooms in real-time. A digital to analogue converter makes it possible to play eight sampled sounds simultaneously. Digital echo and synthesised sound is also thrown in. Wow!

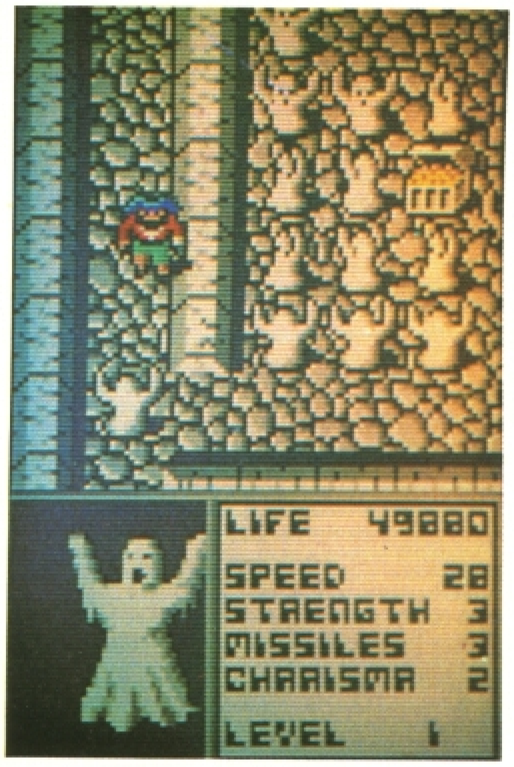
If that's what Nintendo intended for release six months back, what the hell are they going to come up with now?



Notice that the Super Nintendo controller has four fire buttons rather than the usual two.

TURNING JAPANESE

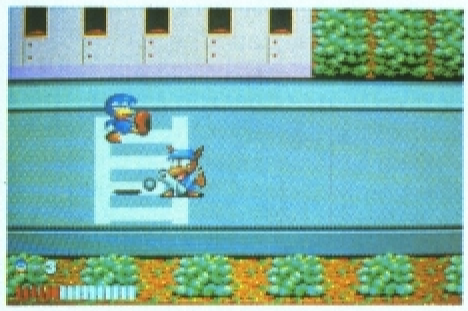
The latest PC Engine game Micro Media have got hold of is *Neutopia*. It's an RPG much like the great *Ultima* series. If I could read Japanese I'd tell you the plot but as it stands, all I comment on is the audio track and the graphics – and they're damned good. Exploration fans are gonna love this one; not only do you have to find out where things are hidden but you'll have to guess what the Japanese messages mean that pop up when conversing with other characters. Micro Media are on (0743) 271792.



ON THE CARDS FROM SEGA

***Dead Angle* has you on the trail of evil gangster bosses. The game is a conversion of Fabtek's coin-op of the same name. Basically you run around spraying bullets into as many hoods as possible.**



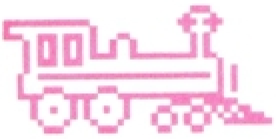


***Dynamite Dux* is a conversion of the cutesy Sega coin-op. You play a mischievous blue duck and have to kick the hell out of anything in your path. Extra weapons like grenades, bazookas and machine guns can be picked up.**

LYNX LAUNCHES

- ***Gauntlet 3* – no surprises here; the game is simply a continuation of the series you've come to love. More magical and menacing foes to defeat.**
- ***Chips Challenge* – a combination of maze and strategy. You must negotiate levels filled with obstacles and obstructions.**
- ***Time Quests & Treasure Chests* – do you notice anything strange about the Lynx game above? You should do: the game is played vertically rather than horizontally. The idea is to run around mazes searching and shooting.**
- ***Rampage* (aka *Monster Rally*) – the game has been held up in a legal wrangle and changed its name in the process. Because the courts haven't finished playing the game, it's unlikely you'll get hold of a copy until the middle of this year.**

A FULL HEAD OF STEAM





The PC Engine hasn't even been officially released in the UK and now Japan has its successor, the *Super Graphx*. *Tony Takoushi* managed to get hold of one on the purple market for a ZERO exclusive...

Dateline: December 8th 1989. Place: Japan. Event: NEC released the PC Engine Super Graphx, a much enhanced version of the PC Engine console, to a rapturous reception. The initial production run of 50,000 units sold out within a few days. In Japan, NEC had scooped another startling success story.

Not surprisingly, it's going to be a long wait before any machines reach Britain through official channels. Console nuts are once again going to have to run the gauntlet of grey importers to sate their state-of-the-art appetites.

The PC Engine Super Graphx retails for 39800 Yen (around £180) and the first game for 6500 Yen (£30). This will probably be the standard price for the new 16-bit/enhanced consoles which hit Japan in 1990 – although when or if the Super Graphx reaches the UK through grey importers, the price for games will probably be in the £40 bracket.

Super Graphx' main competitors are the Sega Megadrive and (eventually) the Konix and Nintendo consoles. The Megadrive is selling well and the quality and breadth of its software catalogue is firmly establishing it as the current market leader in Japan and the US. The Konix has yet to make an appreciable impact; and Nintendo is keeping very quiet about its new 16-bit offering. But one thing's for sure: with the current huge worldwide success of Famicon and Gameboy it must be reluctant to take the edge off them with a new machine.

At present NEC has made no announcement about any plans to launch its machine in the UK and Europe. The launch in September 1989 of its original PC Engine in the US means it is looking to establish it as a worldwide machine; and with Sega gaining such a dominant position in the UK and Europe any plans it has for these territories are likely to be rapidly stepped up.

ENGINE CAPACITY

The Super Graphx is almost three times the size of the original Engine, is made of a tough grey plastic and looks like an enlarged piece of transistor. Far out. And there's some good news: its compatibility with old PC Engine games should raise a cheer from those of us with a large collection of software for the old system.

Hudson Soft have designed the new custom graphics chips in the Super Graphx. Their name should ring a bell with readers of issue one because they are responsible for *Gunhed*, one of the greatest Engine shoot 'em ups. If anyone knows what's necessary to get things moving quickly, then it's got to be Hudson. Indeed, the specifications for the new chips are astounding. The new machine features enhanced sprite handling capabilities (128 can be manipulated at once as opposed to the old machine's 64) and a larger palette of 4096 colours. It has two background screens rather than one; the extra screen means that flicker is removed and sensational parallax scrolling is made possible. Main memory is increased from the old Engine's 8K to 32K , with video RAM doubled to 128K. All this extra memory allows even more complex screens with graphics manipulated at even greater speeds.

There are two ports, the External bus (which is not compatible with the NEC CD ROM unit) and an S EXP port on the front next to the joypad socket. There is no indication what this is for at present. The joypad is the same as that of the original PC Engine but with turbo buttons to save on the bashing.

The games come on ROM cards (capacity around 4 Megabytes) which slot into the top centre of the unit, facing towards you. The power switch slides across to seat the card in place and acts as an on/off switch.

Video output is non-standard (well at least to the UK) with only composite video and no RF (the standard TV output on most consoles). Sound is in stereo with two phono jacks complementing the video phono output.

The Super Graphx must be up there with the best of the new generation of consoles. The fact that it is compatible with old Engine software is a strong plus, even though in that situation it fails to show off the unused extra processing power. Unlike *Battle Ace*, the first game specially designed for it...

BATTLE ACE

There is currently only one game for the system, *Battle Ace*. This cross between *Afterburner* and *Galaxy Force* has you flying around zapping alien nasties. Nothing very original there. But the action is astonishingly fast and addictive and really shows off the graphics capabilities of the new console.

You have to fly over the surfaces of a series of planets, sitting in a cockpit equipped with radar to clue you in to the attack patterns of the enemy space craft. You're armed with forward firing guns and guided missiles which must first be locked onto target. The fighter is highly manoeuvrable, allowing you to perform complete 360 degree spins to freak out the incoming homing missiles launched at you. That's assuming your brain can handle the gyrating horizon if you choose this plan of attack...

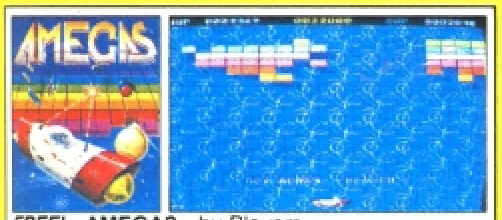


There are many planets to work through and space battle sequences help link it all together. Overall, the game is excellent, with unbelievably smooth, fast and colourful graphics. *Battle Ace* is indisputably an impressive debut. But in the long run, the success of the machine depends on NEC getting solid third party software support.

NICE GRAPHX, SHAME ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY

So where can you get hold of the new NEC console? Well, it has sold out in Japan so the chances of it being widely available on the grey market are slim. Fortunately for you lot, Supervision (0602 475151) have announced that they have got hold of a small number. The price hasn't been finalised but it won't be cheap. Oddly, the largest distributor of PC Engines in this country, Micro Media, have no plans to import the new machine.

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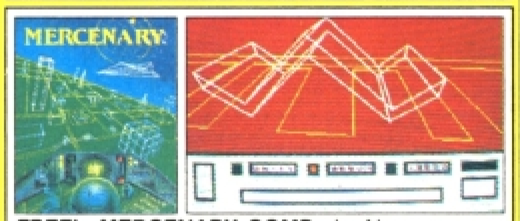
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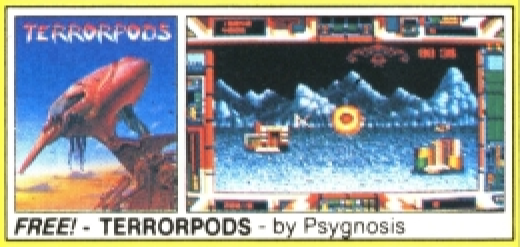
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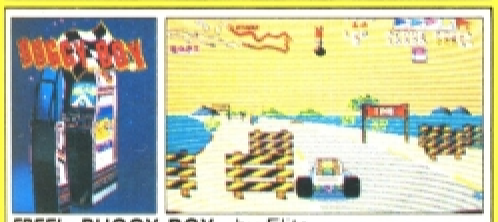
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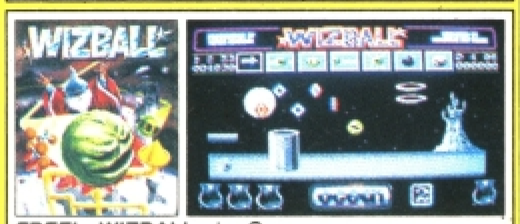
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★ ★ ★ THREE SIZZLING ATARI LYNX GAMES REVIEWED ★ ★ ★

GATES OF ZENDACON

Atari/$39.95*/Lynx

CONSOLE CLASSIC

You're the man for the job. I can tell by the glint (Eastwood) in your eye and the sleek starship you keep in your left pocket that you're the kind of guy not frightened of taking on the Universe. Forget your brain cells; you really don't need them in this game. *Zendacon* is a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up. But don't knock it – for a screen the size of a matchbox, the action is non-stop and incredibly fast.

The idea, as ever, is to rid aliens inhabiting the real estate. Who cares if they were there first or just popped over to say hello? You're a mean mother and don't take kindly to alien filth infesting your air space.

Along with an abundance of angry aliens, you've got to contend with floating debris – cosmic litter louts, I don't know. Nothing changes. And bits fall off your ship at the most inconvenient moments, starting with essentials like erm... well wings and lasers and stuff. Most annoying. At the end of each level sits a super alien. Defeating it will let you through the gate. Then you're given a password so that you can come back to the game at any time you want.

For a portable horizontally-scrolling blast 'em up, there's just nothing to beat *Zendacon*.



Oh heavee – here I am blasting every living thing. Life's a drag; I'd much rather be at home drinking lentil soup. Ha! Fooled you sucker. Get a taste of laser, punk.

THE VERDICT 90

CALIFORNIA GAMES

Atari/Free with console/Lynx

We're gonna have fun, fun, fun in the erm... sun, sun, sun. Dust down your surfboard and head to where the sun, sea, sand and skimpy swimsuits are at. *(Streuth! Ed.)* In the first event you control a surfer through a water pipe. Ducking under the waves and just generally trying to stay afloat is a good laugh, but it's even better when played against an opponent.

You can connect your Lynx to a mate's via something called the Comlynx. It's then possible for both of you to participate in the same game, the idea in the surfing event being to ram and hopefully dislodge your opponent. Sterling stuff.

Skateboarding is another of the challenges. The action is viewed at times from a distance and at others close up – it's here that the hardware scaling really comes into its own. So go to it man, polish that skater speak. Let's see some bio. I wanna see aerials, handplants and ollies. And don't you dare get distracted by the Betties.

Next, it's BMX wheelie time. You must compete against the clock as well as dodging an assortment of obstacles. Sprites are large and cleverly drawn – when you fall off the bike, your guy tries to curl up and protect his head.

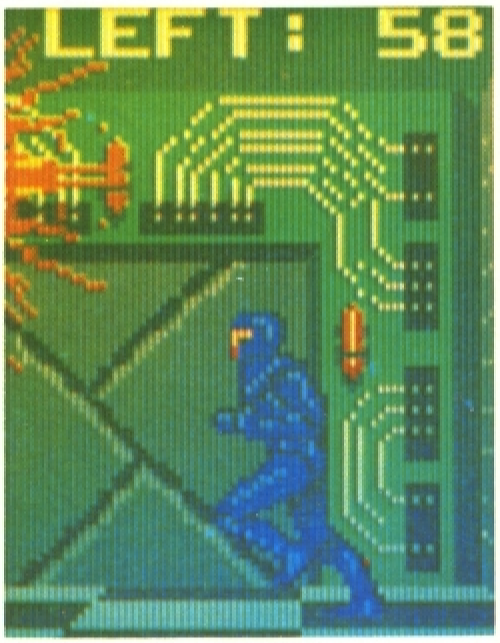
Foot Bagging is apparently big in California – well, it must be otherwise they wouldn't feature it in the game. The idea is to toss a bag back and forth with your feet. *(I can't think of anything more exciting. Ed.)*

As a freebie it's fantastic. And even if it wasn't free, it would be worth adding to your software collection.



Dom, dom, dom, dom... dom, dom, dom, dom... dom, dom, dom, dom, dom, dom, dom... Old Spice, erm... *California Games* surfing.

THE VERDICT 89



Gzzunk, gzzunk, gzzunk – go get 'em you big blue purveyor of justice, truth and the *Robocop* way.

ELECTRO COP

Atari/$39.95*/Lynx

Replace 'Electro' with 'Robo' and you've pretty much guessed what the game is all about. Okay, so *Electro Cop* is blue rather than grey/black. And he's after the President's daughter (no, not in *that* way – she's been kidnapped, see) rather than his murderers. In fact on second thoughts the games aren't alike at all.

***Electro Cop* is a 3D search and shoot affair. The strategy element is kept down to a minimum, mainly because there are so many mechanical menaces meandering through the corridors that you've little time to do any proper searching. The graphics are excellent; some of the backdrops look like they've been ripped out of a computer. Because of this though, your main character tends to get lost in the background.**

Wonderful twists pop up every now and again. For instance, there's a computer terminal which you can access. In addition to providing you with information on the robots you're likely to meet, it contains a games folder. And inside you'll find very playable versions of Atari's classic *Breakout* and *Asteroids*. Problem is you can get too hooked on the sub-games and forget that time is ticking by...

THE VERDICT 86

*Prices given in dollars since UK prices have yet to be announced.

THE SUPER SHINOBI

Supervision (0602 475151)/£40/Sega Mega Drive



Ye gads! You've encountered the first end-of-level guardian. Funnily enough, he doesn't look pleased to see you...

CONSOLE CLASSIC

So you want an arcade machine in your house? Try *Super Shinobi* for size. The game is brilliant – graphics, sounds and playability are leaps and bounds ahead of anything on console or computer. Forget *Shinobi* on any other format, the Mega Drive version is the business. Even the *Shinobi* coin-op lacks the playability of *Super Shinobi*.

The three buttons control your attacks, jumps and Ninjitsu. The type of attack you perform depends on your position and distance from a foe. When close to an opponent you punch, kick or slash. From a distance you hurl shuriken. Two types of jump are possible – an ordinary jump and a somersault jump. Not only can you jump higher when somersaulting, but you can also spray shuriken to cause mass destruction. Yeah, I love it!

Finally, there's Ninjitsu (a super power or strength) which comes in four varieties: ikazuchi, kariu, fushin and mijin. Ikazuchi forms a shield around you which absorbs damage until the shield is depleted. Kariu acts like a smart bomb and kills everything on the screen Fushin allows you to leap much greater distances and mijin is another smart bomb-type weapon. Mijin has an unfortunate side effect: your body explodes and you die.

Each level is completely different from the next; the variety is astounding. You encounter a number of foes including shuriken wielders, armoured samurai, bat-winged men, dogs, grenadiers, riflemen and nuns (honest). Later levels include some powerful martial artists and vicious devils with flails. Armoured opponents are bad news because they're only harmed when you hit them in the fleshy bits.



No wonder; he knew what you had in store for him.

Taking on a horde of little yellow men just wouldn't be possible without a healthy supply of collectables and *Shinobi* is certainly not lacking in that department! Packed away in crates you'll find spare weapons, extra health, power-ups, bombs and lives. Bombs aren't a good thing to find as they detonate after a few seconds and will damage you if you're nearby.

The graphics are excellent: brilliantly detailed, very colourful and masterfully animated. The speed is incredible – no matter what is on the screen (and believe me, there are some big end-of-level guardians) the pace remains the same. Sound is also spectacular, with a different sampled stereo track for each level and 101 different sound effects. Prepare your senses for audio/visual overload...



What's Rambo doing in the picture (bottom left)? And how can we get out of this mess?

THE VERDICT 97

JAPAN WARRIOR

Micro Media (0698 822055) £29.95/ PC Engine

The oriental theme continues with another hack 'n' slay game, this time on the PC Engine. Almost as soon as you start playing you'll think "I've seen this somewhere before" – and you'll be right because it looks and plays very much like *Space Harrier*.

You undertake a mission of mass monster mashing and carry with you a trusty sword which can be upgraded along your journey. Your foes come in many shapes and sizes: ranging from groping hands and crabs to huge heads and Chinese dragons. The dragon is very similar to the end-of-level nasty in *Space Harrier*, flying in and out of the screen spewing fire balls which will turn you brown and crispy if you're not careful. Mmmm, delicious.

The sprites are big, bright, colourful and very well animated. Background scenery is not so hot though; it's very simple and the illusion of movement is rather crude – just bands of colour travelling towards you.

As a game it's fine but too many elements have been stolen from *Space Harrier* – and not always the best ones. A point against it is the difficulty: getting anywhere is tricky and there are no difficulty levels to help the novice gamester. Thankfully you get a password once you complete a level, but getting there in the first place can be a problem.

THE VERDICT 78



So much happens so quickly in *Japan Warrior* that it's impossible to take any pictures without everything blurring. Also, there's no pause mode – well, there is, but it covers the screen with Japanese gobbledygook. That explains the rather dull, empty-looking screen...


A POWERFUL PACK OF FOU
BIO CHALLENGE REPLACES BAT
AS PREVIOUSLY ADVERTISED
LIGHT
FORCE
IK+
They called International Karate 'the greatest Karate beam 'em up yet' (Commodore User).
And who are we to argue?
But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip).
Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD. And balls!
© 1987 Archer Maclean.
© 1987 System 3 Software Ltd.
BIO CHALLENGE
For centuries mankind has been on the wane. The genes that each generation of humans passes onto the next are becoming weaker. The human body will soon become too frail to survive.
Finally, scientists seem to have the answer. They have discovered a revolutionary technique to graft the human brain into the body of a robot.
The results of these experiments are to be tested in the BIO CHALLENGE – the ultimate ordeal.
You are a K.L.I.P.T. – the latest generation of human robot engineering – an extremely sophisticated human brain in a highly manoeuvrable precision-engineered steel body. Your only mission is survival ... for the human race.
© DELPHINE SOFTWARE.
VOYAGER
In 1977 Voyager II was launched – inviting all life forms in the Universe to visit our planet. Get ready – company's coming. Luke Snayles – returning to Earth after completing a 50 year sentence of "investigative exploration" is not a man you'd wish to meet. After half a century of solitude, he's bored and hungry. On Earth the gate crashers are about to arrive – they are the ROXIZ, but Snayles has got other ideas – no-one, but NO-ONE is going to spoil his home-coming party!
© Ocean Software Ltd. 1989.
R-TYPE
Deep in the cosmos, the ultimate
.... The Bydo Empire – evil, horrific,
In the dark recesses of time and
its terrifying creatures roam the
waging war on the Planet Earth. The
desperate battle has just begun ....
pilot of the R-9 fighter plane, it is
mission to crush these interstellar
monsters using every sophisticated
weapon at your disposal. Only your
and reactions stand between
victory – and the devastation of
... At last, the arcade sensation
to your home screen with several
terrains and a compelling scroll
the ultimate in thrilling gameplay.
R-Type™ ©1987 IREM Corporation.
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NINTENDOMANIA EPIDEMIC!

✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ WIN! WIN! WIN! ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

Fasten your seat belts and secure your dentures because the mega succesful video game system **Nintendo**, which has sold like chips in a health farm in the good ol' US of A, is letting rip in the gooder and older UK.

Already much loved by the likes of Tom Cruise, Paul McCartney, Ian Botham and Mrs Ethel Cramworthy of 32 The Larches, Goring On Sea, Sussex, one of these little beauties could soon be snuggling up to you during the long winter evenings. Those embarrassingly generous Nintendo bods have given us three Nintendo Deluxe Sets plus 10 sweatshirts – and with a bit of nous, one of them could be yours.

Just to whet your appetite, the Nintendo Deluxe Set (worth a knee trembling £149.99) consists of a control deck that links into any television, two hand held controllers, a Zapper (a light sensing video gun for taking pot shots at the screen) and R.O.B. the robot who plays alongside you. Add to this a smattering of faberoonie games and you're left with a prize so good that we don't want to give it away.

10 runners-up are also in for a treat, with prizes of sweatshirts so stylish you'll wear them 'til they rot (or someone makes you put them in the washing machine).

GIMMEE GIMMEE GIMMEE

Prizes like these are not just being given away. Well they are really, but first you must answer a mind-numbingly difficult question. The popularity of these video games in the States has been imaginatively described as 'Nintendomania'. There are of course various other sorts of mania, some nice, some not quite so nice and some really rather nasty. Now all you have to do is decide which mania best describes the pictures shown then jot your answers down on the coupon nestling at the bottom of the page. F'rinstance, if you think picture one is a pretty good illustration of kleptomania then jolly well write down that word (after a quick glance in the dictionary) next to number one on the form. Easy huh?

When you've 'racked your brains', send the coupon in to **I'm No Maniac Compo, ZERO Compos, PO Box 1509, Enfield, Middlesex EN1 1LQ.** What are you waiting for? Get manic now!!!

3 NINTENDO DELUXE SETS
10 NINTENDO SWEATSHIRTS





1



2



3

I'M NO MANIAC COMPO

1 ______________________________

2 ______________________________

3 ______________________________

NAME ______________________________

ADDRESS ______________________________

____

______________________________ POST CODE ______________

RULES

Employees of Dennis Oneshots or Nintendo caught entering will have lead weights attached to their mandibles.
Entries received after 31st March 1990 will be torched.
The Editor's decision is final, even if he is a maniac.

BASKETBALL NIGHTMARE

Virgin/£24.95/Sega

It's basketball like you've never seen before, a game against the weirdest collection of misfits you'll ever come across.

First you select one of three modes: computer versus computer, human versus computer or human versus human. Next you choose the play time: 15, 30 or a marathon 45 minutes.

You've got six teams to play in computer versus human mode. You start against the Wolfmen and then proceed to the Water Imps, Cyclops, Vampires, Witches and finally the Long Nose Goblins. It's wickedly funny to watch but when you get to play, the joke's generally on you because your opponents are such skilful players.



That massive sprite is animated, as are countless others like it. *Basketball Nightmare* is stunning to watch and even better to play.

Each basketball game is played away – that is, at your opponents' home ground – so you get to see some very pretty sights indeed.

Apart from your varying wacky opponents and their great prowess at netting the ball using some fancy jumps, *Basketball Nightmare* plays like any ordinary game of basketball. The standard travelling, obstruction and three-second rules all apply.

The graphics are all well designed and move reasonably well, though when 10 players get into a small area of screen, things start to flicker noticeably. But that said, this is one sports simulation you're going to have to get – it's just so damn addictive and the graphics are stunning. Be prepared for a long battle though; the computer teams are swines to beat.

THE VERDICT 88

CONSOLE CHEATS!

Your regular dose of indispensable game tips, passwords, hints, hacks and generally underhand gameplaying methods.

R-TYPE
Sega
Plug both joycards in and hold the diagonal on control pad one which faces down and to the right, and the diagonal pointing up and right on control pad two. Hold button one and switch on the Sega. Keep everything pressed until the *R-Type* logo appears. Start the game as usual and you'll find you're armed to the hilt.
On level four you'll find a screen packed from top to bottom with green dots; halfway up you'll see a gap in the landscape. Fly up and into it to reach a bonus level.
When you're at the continue screen section, move the joypad clockwise to receive an extra credit. You can keep doing this until you've got 12 credits. If you move the joypad anticlockwise you'll enter a sound test screen.

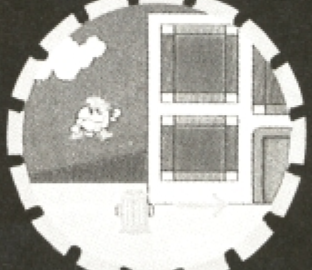
BLACK BELT
Sega
The screen flashes blue for a short period after the opening titles; if you press the reset button when the screen turns blue you'll be awarded infinite lives.

ROCKY
Sega
Plug in a rapid fire unit into port one during the bonus stages and keep your fingers on both buttons to build up loads of energy. You should be able to defeat Drago easily.

ALTERED BEAST
Sega
Hold the up and left diagonal button on the control pad while simultaneously pressing both buttons. You'll get five life bars rather than three.

DRAGON SPIRIT
PC Engine
Press the fire buttons one after the other on the title screen. You'll hear a clink – start the game as soon as you hear this noise. When you lose all your lives you'll be returned to the title screen, only this time it will have a message asking whether you wish to continue or not. There are only two continues, so use them wisely.

PACLAND
PC Engine



On the title screen hold down both fire buttons and press RUN. A screen showing a large pacman will appear. Hold down both fire buttons and press RUN again. You will enter a setup screen which allows you to choose the number of lives and provides you with a skip-level feature. After making your choices, you'll enter a sound test screen. Press RUN to continue with the game.

DUNGEON EXPLORER
PC Engine
Use the code JMPAN-IIPHI to enter the last level with incredible power.

TROJAN™

TROJAN
Nintendo
By pressing up and START you'll be able to continue from where you died.

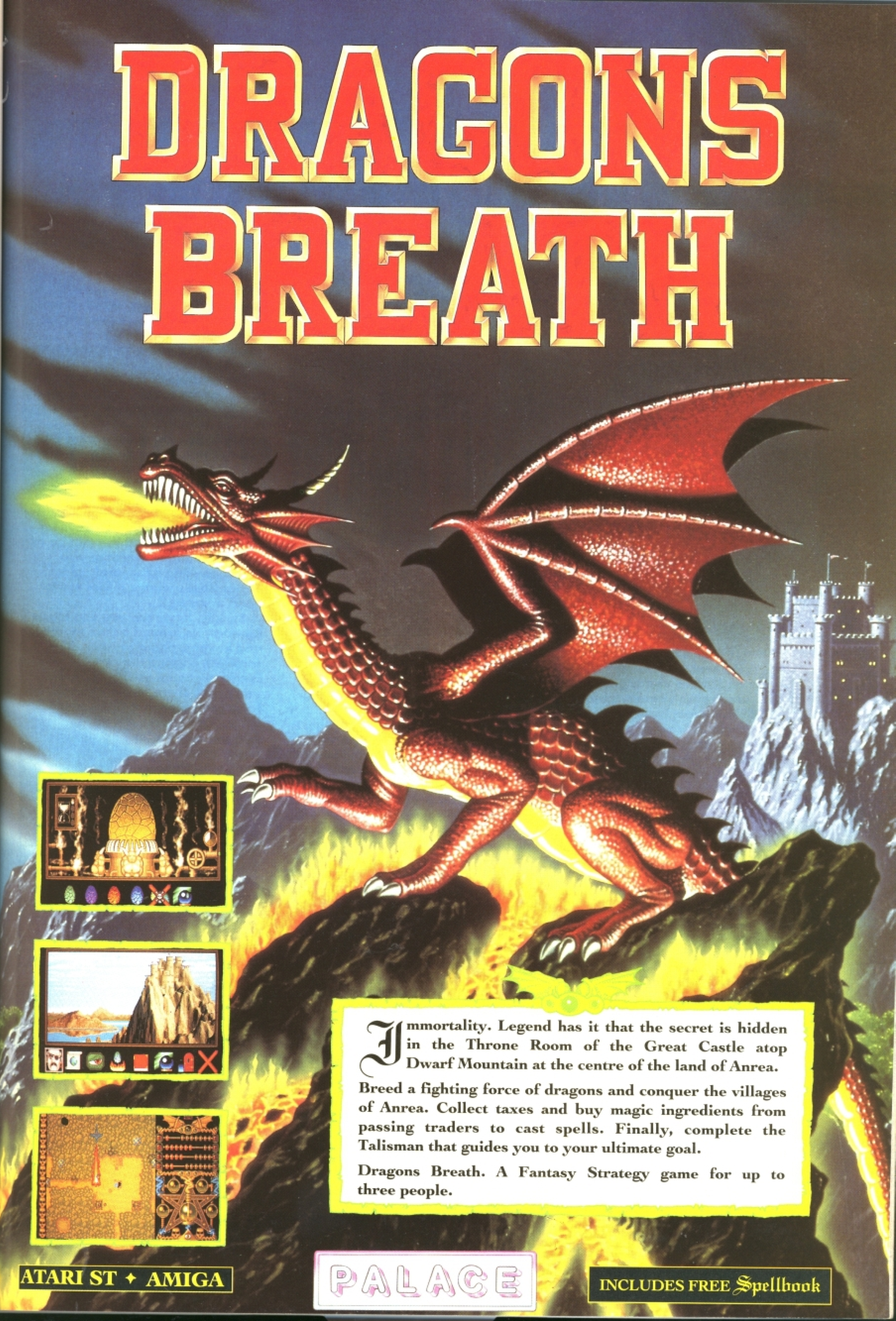
XEVIOUS
Nintendo
Shortly after you reach the first wave of spinning walls, you'll come to a lake. If you shoot bombs into the water a flag inscribed with S will appear. Fly over the flag and you'll be awarded an extra life.
Here's how to get past the flying fortress. Wait until you ship stops moving forward and hit the START button to pause the game. Hit START again to continue. You'll find that instead of having to fight the fortress, you can move past it. However, you've got to be careful you don't touch it or run into its bullets.

OPERATION WOLF
Nintendo
If you shoot all the birds or pigs on a level and collect all the boxes towards the end, a nine-pack grenade box and a Red Cross box will appear.
On the last level you will need at least five grenades for the end-of-level chopper.
Shoot about 2cm above the head of the end-of-level character that appears in the jungle. This should kill him without hurting the woman hostage. When the man appears with the flag, keep shooting as far down to the bottom right as possible to gain a Red Cross box before your cursor disappears.
Before you get to the airport scene, ensure you finish off all the other scenes. If you don't, the congratulations man at the end won't be too happy.
Simon Burrill, Collingwood.
RC Pro-Am will be zooming its way to you, Simon, for all the great Nintendo tips you've sent in.

GAMES! GAMES! GAMES!

Like Simon Burrill this month, you too could be the lucky recipient of a fabulous game for your console. How? It's simple. All you have to do is send in a good game tip, cheat or map and hope it gets printed. If it does, you'll get something special. Don't delay, send today to **Cheat! Console Action, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE.**

STOP



DRAGONS BREATH
Immortality. Legend has it that the secret is hidden in the Throne Room of the Great Castle atop Dwarf Mountain at the centre of the land of Anrea.
Breed a fighting force of dragons and conquer the villages of Anrea. Collect taxes and buy magic ingredients from passing traders to cast spells. Finally, complete the Talisman that guides you to your ultimate goal.
Dragons Breath. A Fantasy Strategy game for up to three people.
ATARI ST ✦ AMIGA
PALACE
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review

CONQUEROR

Since *David McCandless* and *Paul Lakin* are a tad fond of getting tanked up (on shandy you understand), we generously allowed them a peak at the latest pipeline offering in a whole platoon of low-alcohol games, *Conqueror.*



Victory to Helmut 'King Tiger' Müller by two submissions and a KO...

David Braben virtually fathered home micro vector graphics, sired space strategy games and still had enough energy to spawn some impressive explosion routines. He broke all the byelaws of keeping-revolutionary-ideas-to-yourself when he wrote *Elite* (a game far ahead of its time). And he has again proved his programming expertise with his latest vector graphics tank-attempt, *Conqueror*.

The basic idea of the game is control a tank (or tanks) through three different games, revolving around the central theme of terrain warfare. The three games are:

Arcade – You have the tank under your 'control' (I say that loosely) while the computer obligingly sends waves of bigger and better and badder tanks in your direction. Killing these paves the way for upgrades on your tank. The waves are endless, the gameplay mindless and the games short.

Attrition – "A war whose outcome depends on which side can last longer," says the dictionary. You commandier a platoon of tanks: two light, one medium, one heavy (and one medium rare). Switching from one to the other and shunting your drone tanks around the map is the order of the day. The computer starts with less tanks than you but gradually evolves into a mammoth battalion (that's a 'big group of tanks' not a 'collection of pre-historic woolly elephants').

Strategy – both the player and the computer buy tanks on a stringent budget. Gameplay is as per usual but map fire, spotter planes and secondary objectives spice things up. A white circle marks the map. Following your more tribal instincts you must claim this area for yourself by remaining in it for 60 seconds (and not giving way to any 'pale-faces' while you're there). The landscape unfolds like a tapestry with rolling hills, valleys, houses, trees, churches and rivers giving it character and colour. You don't have a bird's-eye view but more of a slightly elevated bird-perching-on-nearby-tree view. Your tank is at the centre and the screen undulates placidly in each direction. The outskirts of the screen are cut away so there's no peeking into the distance on this one. Your motion is governed by physics, which means you chug slowly up slopes and go faster down hills while inertia keeps you skidding for some time after braking.

The controls of the tank are quite tricky for the rookie. Unlike a car or other domestic vehicle, a tank runs on two individually-controllable caterpillar tracks. This means there is one key for moving the left track forward, one for moving the right track back and so on. All pretty straightforward – but there are also two keys for swivelling the turret, two keys for raising and lowering the gun barrel and a fire button which means you're looking at several pairs of hands (and perhaps a foot too for good measure).

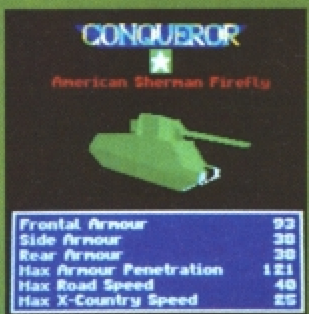
Luckily, however, you can juggle the controls around between mouse and keyboard and joystick. You can even engage the services of a friend to control your turret while you drive. There is also the option for a computer-controlled gunner or driver. This makes the going about 104 per cent easier and cuts the finger requirement down to about four (plus pinky).

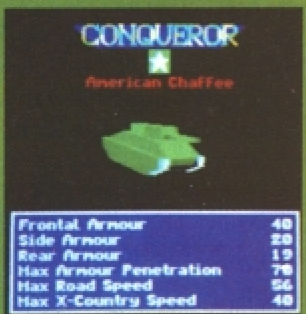
WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Conqueror
PUBLISHER	Rainbow Arts
PRICE	ST/Amiga £19.99 PC £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

ARTHUR DALEY'S USED TANKS







'Ello mate. You look like you've got a lucky face. Can I interest you in this week's specials? The Chaffee, one lady owner, lovely nick. Or how about this souped up Cortina? Erm, sorry I mean King Tiger.

Paul: Reviewing tank games is easy isn't it? I mean you just sort of trundle around blasting at things a bit then rehash an old tank review while waiting for the kettle to boil. Unfortunately this doesn't work for *Conqueror*. By tank game standards this is a tadge on the weird side. In fact it's pretty peculiar by any standards.

The action takes place on a strange flat world (Drake was wrong after all.) in which you and the computer battle for supremacy and the computer wins. Graphics are interesting but confusing too. Surely camouflage was never supposed to stop you seeing your own tank, especially when you're in it.

During the combat sequences all the tanks sort of blend into one. There are tanks sitting on each other, tanks climbing inside each other and tanks doing I don't know what to each other. (Though I've got a few nasty suspicions.)

Once you've finally worked out where your tank is you've got to suss out how to control it. The controls are pretty realistic, what with independent tracks and the like but if God had meant us to play *Conqueror* he'd have given us more limbs. Even when you reach the controls they're far from fast. By the time you've engaged first gear the computer has reduced you to chippolatas. This makes the Arcade option a bit silly.

HASTLE FACTOR: 2
Doesn't come supplied with a spare arm.

The Attrition option, allowing you to access a map, is a bit better. Now you can see where the enemy are when they destroy you. As for the Strategy... well to be honest there's not a lot of strategy. It's more arcade with frills.

Conqueror is not without its interesting points but the whole is definitely less than the sum of the parts.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	84
S	SOUND	65
A	ADDICTIVENESS	70
E	EXECUTION	78

Only a must for real tank freaks.

75

Macca: The graphics are very good. The ray-traced mini tanks animate fluidly while keeping their 'scaled-down original' look and dimensions. And the trees, bushes, farmhouses and bridges are excellently detailed and a joy to destroy or run over (you can go all out against the countryside in this game). Attention to detail is minute. I especially appreciated the way tanks scrunch across the fields, carving up muddy trails in their wake.



One more Bosch tin pot to knock out, then we can collect all the Lego bricks.

All the aesthetic details are there too. A khaki loading screen and suitably 'ballistic' title tune which vividly thuds out its machine gun samples and heavy guitar chords through the Amiga speaker. The note of millitary authenticism is maintained with plenty of opportunity to see 3D tanks rotating about the option screens. The instructions are well-written, generously outlining every nuance of the game, but are padded out with interesting details and specs on all terrain armoured combat vehicles ('tanks' to you).

Such a good-looking, well-researched game would be a joy to play, right?

Well, frankly, no. The problem is that most of the country is green. Fine and enviromentally aware, you might say. Bad and completely annoying, I would reply. Why? Because your tank is green too – it's so flippin' well camouflaged that even you can't see what it's doing! Your gun turret just happens to be the same shade of emerald as the grass, so you have no real idea which direction its pointing in. You have to go to ridiculous lengths, roving the farmlands for a sandpit or a river just so you can see in contrast which way you're facing.

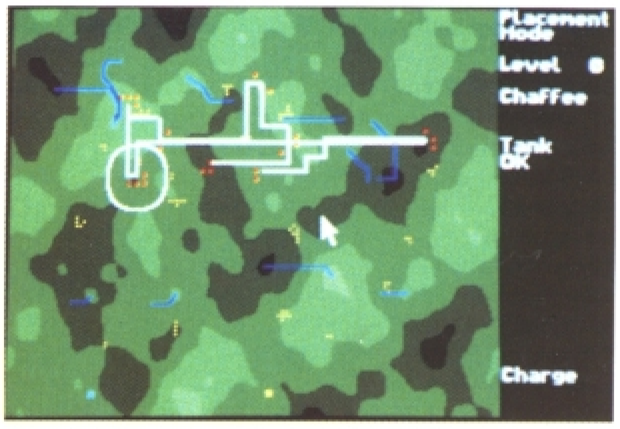
And to make matters worse your gun turret is S.L.O.W. We're talking time-taken-to-realise-the-Guildford-Four-were-innocent slow; we're talking Ali from *EastEnders* slow. Your enemies have time to invade, to obliterate your tank, have a quick game of tank 'tig', mash up the countryside a bit, journey to Proxima Centuari 4.2 light years away and collect some scrapings of fungus from the planet there, come back and host a bring-along-a-Sherman party at the 'mess' before your turret has even turned one 'minute' clockwise.

At one time, the screen only shows a portion of the landscape (if you're still 'enmeshed' in the earlier tapestry metaphor then it's a 'section of cloth' to you). The rest is abruptly sliced away. This great swath of blackness around you gives your enemies room to amass unseen off screen and then suddenly pile in, projectiles er, projecting. You do have a radar system, but it gives no effective idea of proximity. Usually the only hint you get that an enemy is approaching is the plume of smoke rising from your shot-to-bits tank.

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
Lots of experimentation with the controls needed before you can really play the game.

Strategy games are great. Arcade games are great. Strategy/arcade games are greater. *Conqueror* has tried to make an effort to combine these lovely genres, but the resulting strategy is too flimsy and the arcade action is too unwieldy, and there's no happy balance between the two. There's not enough to satisfy either types of gameplayer.

A prime objective like an enemy base to invade, or a variety of opponents (things like planes, helicopters or ground troops for instance) would have made a more interesting and playable game.



Terrain courtesy of Milton Keynes Road Transport Department.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	85
S	SOUND	55
A	ADDICTIVENESS	65
E	EXECUTION	88

Good-looking but thin tank strategy/arcade game. Bit ropey in the arcade department, and on the strategy side too.

73

STOP



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LETTERS

Have *you* anything of earth-shattering importance to get off your chest? Then you'd better see a Doctor or write to *Tim* 'I really wanted to answer letters for *Pig Breeders Monthly*' Ponting, ZERO Letters, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Those printed recieve a fab ZERO enamel badge.

A GREEN LETTER

Those lucky people who own printers soon find out how much waste paper is thrown away. Most people just put their rubbish in a bin and forget about it. The paper is then burnt by the dustmen. This creates CO_2 (carbon dioxide for the thick) which of course ruins the ozone layer. The best way of getting rid of your printer paper is to stuff it in a box and take it down to the dump where it will be recycled to be printed on another day.
Yours Environmentally Friendly,
Mr Greene, Newbury, Berks.

Couldn't agree more. But why is it that recycled paper always looks like it's been taken straight out of the lavvy and dried? **Ed.**

QUESTION TIME

Let's get the boring 'Congratulations on a fresh and brilliant new magazine' (which it is) out of the way and get down to some points and questions I would like to raise.

1) The best thing about ZERO is its humour, it's probably one of the most hilariously (is that how you spell it?) funny magazines I've ever read.
2) The way the actual reviews are presented is head and shoulders (I didn't know you had dandruff) above the other magazines on the market.
3) How tall is Jackie Ryan?
4) Is there any way I can get issue one of ZERO as I only have issues two and three.
5) Finally, where can I get Rainbow pyj... *(Snip. Ed.)*

Paul 'No one ever taught me how to set out a letter properly because I'm a shandy drinker' Wickert Sittingbourne, Kent.

1) Too kind, 2) Ooh, you shouldn't, 3) 2' 6" and shrinking, 4) Back Issues are in the Yikes section, 5) From Austin Reed. Ha, fooled you! **Ed.**

ZERO HERO

Just a few lines to say how much I really enjoy ZERO. I am a self confessed computer mag addict and I must say that ZERO is by far the best to date.

The first thing I noticed about ZERO was the price. How could a 16-bit mag cost the same as a speccy mag when the quality of the colour and the thickness is far superior? Reviewing a game on different formats is a good one. There are plenty of times a review is given to a game using the best computer which often misleads you into buying it.

The whole magazine is full of interesting reviews and the layout sticks out from all the others. I look forward to the next few issues with great eagerness.

John Cozens, Middlesbrough, Cleveland.

Funnily enough, we think it's definitely the best 16-bit magazine around, too. Spook! **Ed.**

HIGH BIAS

Is it just me or is yours just another mag that'll nearly always give the Amiga version of a game a better review than the ST version? When *Tintin* is more or less a straight port from the ST with no hassle factor, how does the Amiga get a better review? If as your reviewer says of *Dynamite Dux*, there is only the music to tell them apart, how is it the ST gets a lower mark? I'm sure you're aware that the ST has no hardware scroll and the Amiga has, so if they're nearly the same, surely the ST version makes better use of the host machine.

At this point I would like to say please don't say that you review each game separately for each machine as the *Strider* review would disprove this.

To finish, I would like to say that yours could be a good magazine if you iron out the points I make above and I will continue to buy it for the next couple of issues. If I discover that you are still biased towards certain machines, there would be no point in me continuing to buy your mag as I'm sure you realise that if I want bias I would buy an ST or Amiga dedicated mag.

Jeff, North Shields, Tyne and Wear.

Sorry, but you've got the wrong end of the armadillo. What makes you think that the Strider *piece proves that we don't review games separately for each machine? No comprendo. The simple explanation is this – different reviewers look at the same games separately on different machines. Amazingly enough, sometimes they end up coming to different conclusions. Shock horror! The game is being reviewed, not the machine, so hardware doesn't enter the equation. We really aren't biased we just prefer the Amiga. Only joking!* **Ed.**

EGON WHO?

After returning from my latest space mission destroying the evil race of THE MUTANT RICK ASTLEY FUNGUS BLOBS, I popped into my local newsagents mistaking it for the chemists but then realised I needed a mag. I said to the person behind the counter "What computer mags do you have?"

This strange looking woman with one eye and a large scar stretching from her nose to her ear said "over there on that shelf."

I told her, "I'm looking for an interesting, exciting, semelfactive, mettlesome, disjunctive..." *(Great big snip. Ed.)*

She replied, "that's an easy one, read a copy of ZERO, the Ziofrods find it funny so you should."

And so from that day on I read your magazine. Must go now, International Rescue is calling, the planet Octofron is under attack from short, anorexic Australian dwarfs who kill their prey by singing 'I should be so lucky'.

Cheers ears and out from
Egon Starblaster, Seaton, Devon.

What a fascinating tale. At last! An intelligent, informed reader who reads dictionaries in his spare time and isn't afraid to speak out on issues of great import. **Ed.**
You've been nicking my letters again, haven't you? **Black Shape.**
Shut up. **Ed.**

SPACE ACED OUT

Alright, who's the wise guy who put *Space Ace* on the front cover of issue three, yes, if you look it's there near the bottom of the page betwixt *Ghostbusters II* and *The Lost Patrol.*

I looked for what seemed like years for *Space Ace* and you've hidden it, haven't you? It can't be you've made a mistake? Not excellent ZERO? Please tell me where it is.

PS Keep up the good work.
SM Baxter, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

Erm... ahem... well, um, actually it was a teensy-weensy cock up. But I'm sure the definitive Space Ace *review in issue four made up for it. And the Complete Solution in this ish. Our humble apologies for the confusion.* **Ed.**

**WRITE TO THE ED,
ZERO, 14 RATHBONE PLACE,
LONDON, W1P 1DE.
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All letters win a ZERO badge.**

DÉJÀ VU

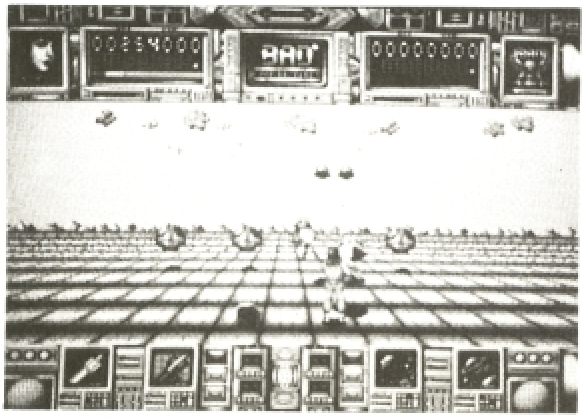
Hmm, that sounds a bit foreign doesn't it? Don't worry, the games are all quite familiar. This is the section where we take a look at spanking new formats of old(ish) games. So here's this month's selection...

BAD COMPANY

Logotron/£24.99/Out now

Paul: *Bad Company* consists of the sort of people who say 'mutha' instead of 'mother' and will need no second invitation to drop their trousers and show you their battle scars. Yeuch.

You have to recruit one of these lovelies and then select a planet so that he can introduce it to the benefits of colonialisation. To be honest, I could see precious little difference between the performance of the characters and the



planets seemed well nigh identical.

Colonisation consists of walking down a path and killing things. The occasional pause to pick up more weapons and replenish energy stocks would be wise but apart from that it's strictly a case of move and shoot.

Movement ranges from slow to sluggish and the sound is disappointingly thin for an Amiga version. Some of the meanies are quite interesting, particularly the walking, blinking eyes but not interesting enough to sustain interest. Basically this is *Space Harrier* with lead boots on.

GRAPHICS 78	ADDICTIVENESS 70	OVERALL 72
SOUND 64	EXECUTION 75	

NEBULUS

Hewson/£24.99/Out now

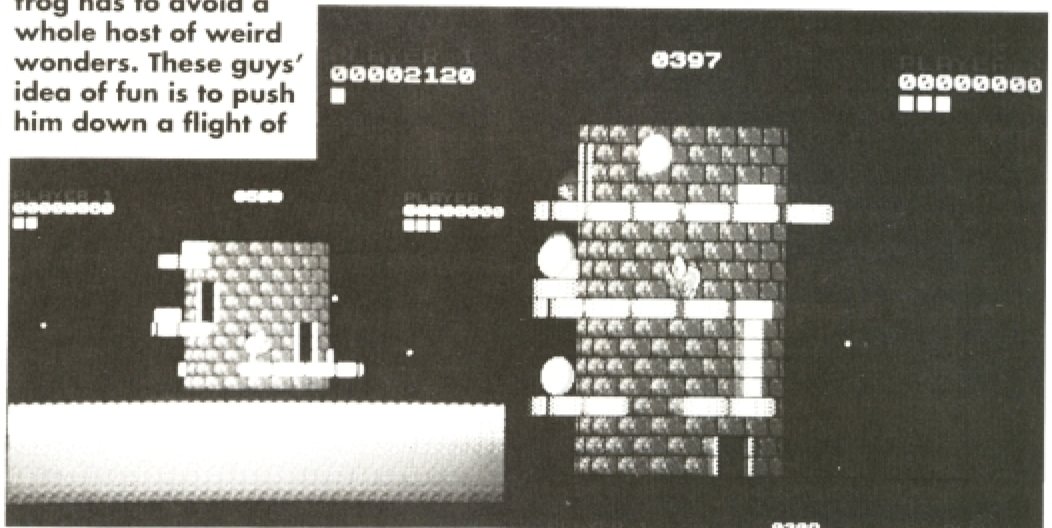
Paul: *Nebulus* is about a frog which, rather than sitting around snogging with Princesses, visits towers in its submarine, climbs to the top of them and then blows them up. Don't ask me why, frogs are strange like that. Getting to the top of the tower, the frog has to avoid a whole host of weird wonders. These guys' idea of fun is to push him down a flight of stairs or two or even into the sea.

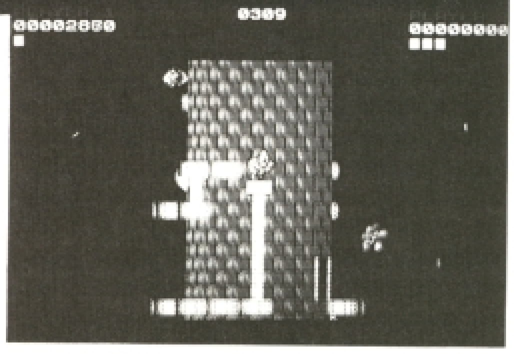
***Nebulus* is a puzzling game akin to those things you get inside Christmas Crackers when you have to get five steel balls into tiny holes. You loathe it; but you can't resist going back for one more go.**

The graphics are strangely effective. As you climb the towers, the first twinges of vertigo begin to gather in the pit of your stomach. At times the tower seems to spin of its own violition, creating a world where you have to run to stand still.

However the appeal of the game is not in its graphics or sound. Its appeal, or irritant, lies in its addictiveness. Three millimetres from the top you get knocked down a few steps. In trying to recover you slip and tumble down to the bottom. Do you give up? Do you heckers. Instead you think "I know how to get past that staircase *this* time."

***Nebulus* is a game you'll love to hate and will carry with you all the way to your nervous breakdown.**



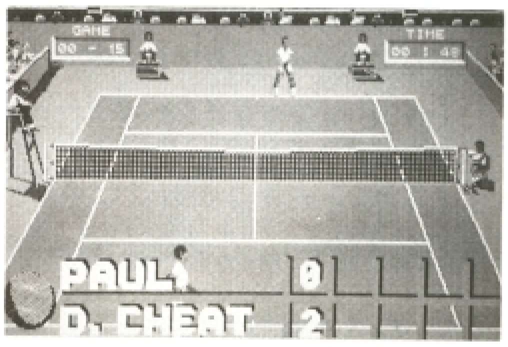


GRAPHICS 80	ADDICTIVENESS 89	OVERALL 88
SOUND 68	EXECUTION 90	

PRO TENNIS TOUR

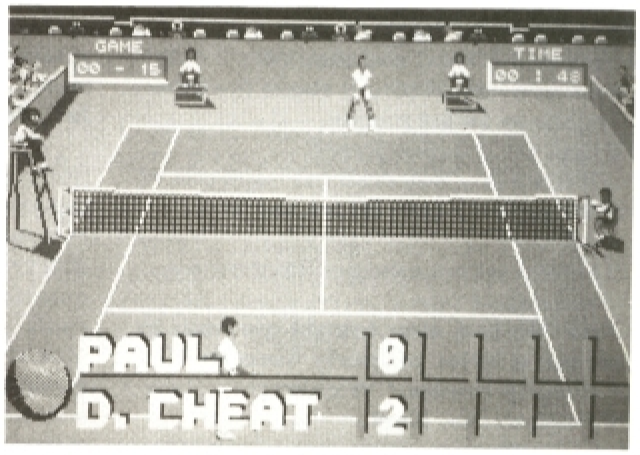
Ubi Soft/£29.99/Out now

Paul: It's unlikely that Ubi Soft were inspired to develop their *Pro Tennis Tournament* by my antics on the court. If they had, they'd have produced a sweaty, clumsy game which kept falling flat on its face. Instead the game they have produced is slick, fast and immensely playable.



Graphically the game is accurate if not perfect. Players and officials move extremely smoothly (which is important) but are very odd colours. The sound gives the impression that the game is being played on a wet blanket but that's PCs for you. Basically *Pro Tennis* looks okay and plays just like a dream.

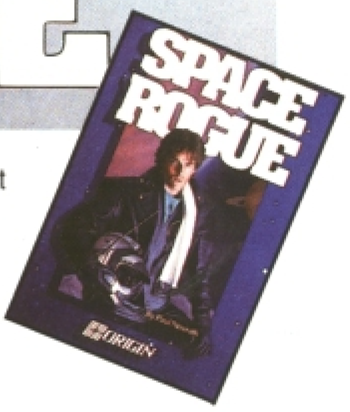
But at first it can be a little bit daunting. It seems impossible to get near the ball let alone hit it and that's on the easiest level. However with perseverance, and some wise use of the practice option, you gradually get into the swing of things (sorry). By that time you'll be hooked on an excellent and demanding sport sim.



GRAPHICS 85	ADDICTIVENESS 86	OVERALL 87
SOUND 55	EXECUTION 89	



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review

DRAGON'S BREATH

We've been waiting for this one with bated breath – *Dragon's Breath* to be precise. *Tim Ponting* starts his own battery farm as he sinks his fangs into Palace's long awaited fantasy strategy game...



One of thoe three Castle screens. This one depicts the abode of Ametrin, the green beast. Ugly or what!

Anrea is the perfect place for a good-time dragon. Up at around lunchtime, a leisurely stroll down to the egg incubators to see how junior's cooking and off for a bit of gratuitous rape and pillage. If only the master would lay off the whip and those barbarians would bog off and stop eating everyone...

***Dragon's Breath* gives you a chance to manage a stable of winged wonders in a quest for the secret of immortality. In the centre of its fantasy world lies Dwarf Mountain, a place more evil even than number 10 Downing street. Legend has it that the throne room contains the secret of eternal life. But before you can pop over and scoop the manufacturing rights for whatever is to be found there, three pieces of talisman must be found and guarded by your dragons.**

Since you only start the game with one beastie, it's time to get breeding. At the outset, you have 20 eggs, up to four of which may be put in the incubator at any one time. But as in real life, nothing comes free and to breed dragons an income must be generated. This is done by conquering villages and generally extending your sphere of influence. The more unscrupulous you are, the more dosh you'll rake in.

***Dragon's Breath* is a three player game. Alternatively, the computer can be co-opted to take the place of any or even all of the three central characters: Bachim the alchemist, Ouered the she-vampire and Ametrin the green beast. The computer is a pretty hot player, so it's probably wise for the beginner to play all three and deliberately kill two of 'em off. You perish when you have no dragons and no money – it's a bit like being a professional horse breeder without a stud and no money to buy one.**

An important part of the game – and certainly the most difficult part to master – is the casting of spells. These can be used to increase your wealth, affect your dragons' powers and bring fame, fortune or disaster to various villages in the Anrea arena. Spells are not predetermined, which gives you free rein or a headache depending on how you look at it. The process is phenomenally time consuming and complex and although you can play without casting magic, erm... you'll lose.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Dragon's Breath
PUBLISHER	Palace
PRICE	£29.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Late February

AMIGA A

Tim: At first glance, *Dragon's Breath* is fearsomely complicated. You have to juggle dragons, eggs, money, pieces of talisman and plan world domination all at the same time. But because every action on screen is icon-driven, it's pretty easy to get into quickly. Well, erm... perhaps 'quickly' is really the wrong word to use, but we'll get to that in good time.

Boot up and move through the stunning opening screens. To business. Select the players and you move to the Main Game Screen. Each player takes a turn before clicking on the egg timer to move the action on by a month.

To plan your turn, click on the player icon to take you to your real estate: the Castle Screen. Each player has their own pad, complete with dragons' lairs, map room, library... everything in fact that the self-respecting rich oppressor could wish for. Take Bachim for example. (Preferably somewhere a long way away.) This is what the poor dear did in Rhintrim ora (month to you) 2045.

A MONTH IN THE LIFE OF A BORED RICH PLAYBOY

1st: Up early (midday). Went to the library. Checked out my accounts. What a smug rich dictator I am. Looked at current affairs. Those dratted peasants are all at war (what a surprise, yawn) and Xian has taken hostages. Hold on, Dinon's offering a reward for their return. (Greedily rubs hands.)



Ooohh... a handle-bar bearded wierdo wants to sell me drugs. Just say no!

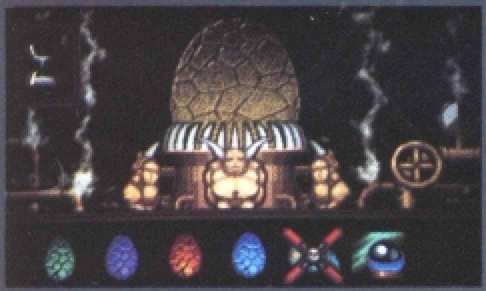
2nd: Went to the hatchery. Put an egg on the boil, low heat. When he hatches, I'll call him Clifford. That way I might flog him off to Listerine when he's old and decrepit.

3rd: Went to the lab to cast a spell. Cocked it up as usual but it smelt nice so I drank it. Wow!

4th: Visited Calgor in the lair. He wanted to go and burn up a few peasants but I've got a hangover after drinking that gargle blaster.

5th: Wandered over to the map room. Tried to decide who to invade next and chose Xian because it'll earn me dosh,

CLIFFORD THE LISTERINE DRAGON



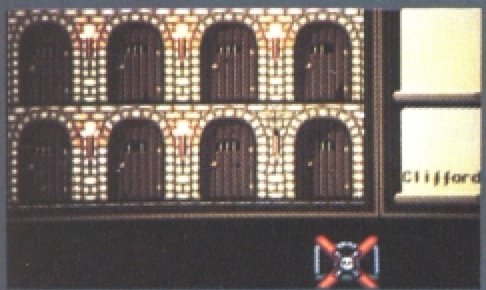
1 Time to put an egg* on the back burners. The wheel can be turned with the mouse to increase or decrease the temperature. The hotter the incubator becomes, the quicker the dragon will appear (and the more money it'll cost to run the hatchery). But it'll be weaker too, so you have to decide whether speed of hatching or quality of final dragon is at a premium.



2 After several months of wheel twiddling and observation, the egg is well and truly hard boiled. Ooops, here comes the cutie. Looks like a 'Clifford' to me.



3 Wow, dragons grow fast! Clifford only hatched 25 seconds ago! Moving the cursor across the dragon's body calls up boxes representing Wisdom, Health, Disease, Age, Speed and Strength. Let's take a look at Clifford. Erm... I think he's a bit stupid. Strong, fast and thick. Obviously not yet sophisticated enough to take a princess back to his lair.



4 This is the site of Clifford's luxury penthouse suite. Don't think much of his taste in interiors. Needs a new caretaker too.



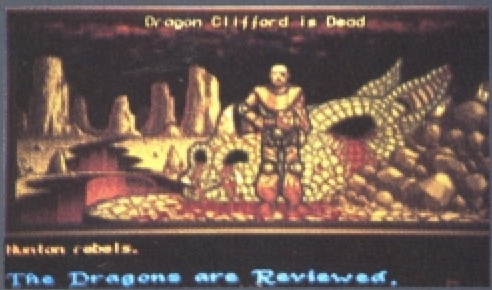
5 Time to give Cliff the chance to spread his wings and breathe his halitosis all over a bunch of puny, insignificant peasants. This village looks perfect. Notice all the nice half-timbered real estate. Well worth grabbing from under the noses of the opposition. Might even find a piece of talisman...



6 Wheee!!! Easier to fly thaan an F-29 Retaliator and more fun than exploding ants in the garden with a magnifying glass. In this sequence you control Clifford as he battles his way through the village defences and burns up the inhabitants. The bigger the settlement the more they throw at you.



7 This screen assesses you performance during the raid. Clifford was rather pathetic. The village is largely unscathed, unlike Cliff who is. Maybe all that listerine knackered his bad breath so he ended up spewing perfume rather than flame all over the peasants.



8 Clifford's either fast asleep with a terrible dose of slimy red snot or dead. I think I'd put money on the latter. Time to get back to the hatchery and cook up a nice meaty Puff...

*All dragon's eggs are guaranteed salmonella free

it's not too far away and 'cause I don't care for the name.
6th: A bloomin' trader woke me up at 10 in the morning and tried to flog me dodgy, black market spell ingredients for making Clifford big, fast and strong. Decided Calgor would get jealous so I told him to stuff his Tius up... *(Snip. Ed.)*

PLAYING UP

Okay, so it was a silly diary but it gives you an idea of the sort of thing you have to do every month. You have to keep an eye on current affairs, accounts and spell inventory in the library. This helps you plan who to conquer and how much you're likely to get out of it. A visit to the lair lets you take a close look at your dragon's powers and cast spells to increase them. You have the opportunity to buy ingredients off traders (when they call) if you're short.

HASSLE FACTOR: 6
Not much swapping but a long pause virtually every time you click on an icon. Yawn.

Keeping an eye on the hatchery is essential. You need to know when a dragon is going to be born and adjust the heat according to these requirements. But the crucial activity takes place in the map room: sending dragons on assignmnents...

VILLAGE PILLAGING

The main map shows the whole of Anrea. Flags of the three different colours show which player owns what. At the moment it's just their own castles.



Assault on Anrea? Piece of cake as I've just become the proud father of Elliot (hem).

Clicking on the magnifying glass allows you to look at a specific area. Using the arrows to scroll around, you can place the cursor over villages to see their population details. The colour of the box around them denotes their race: different races wage war against each other. You can even click on the village to look at a picture of the settlement close up.

Once you've found a suitable village to annexe, you click on the dragon icon to arrange a sortie. You have the choice of just attacking or of trying to conquer

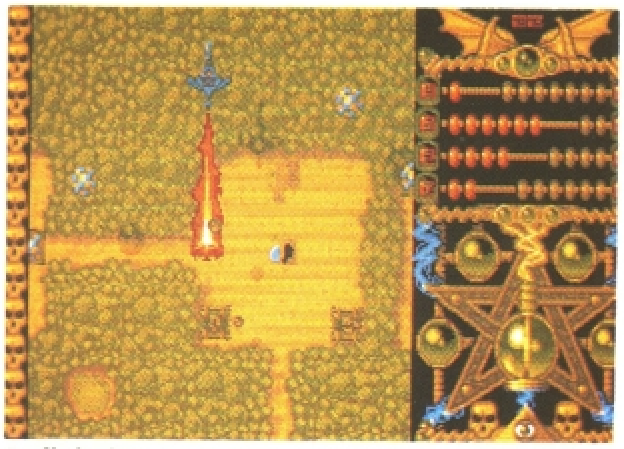
and keep the village.

The actual attack can be handled by the computer for you: the easy way out. Select how much Zeal you want your dragon to use (not much for an attack on a tiny village, maximum to conquer a large settlement) and quit the screen. It doesn't happen straight away; all the dragon missions are resolved at the end of the move in turn for each player. The computer-controlled sequence is nowt short of pathetic when it finally arrives. A dragon appears at the top left, glides across the screen spewing fire and disappears off the right. Fortunately, it only takes a few seconds: just enough time to locate a tinny and crack it open for light refreshment.

Alternatively, clicking on the training option lets you play the attack yourself in the form of an arcade sequence...

THE BAD BREATH SHOOT 'EM UP

A bit of a disappointment on this front. It looks pretty enough, but the play is not stunningly original. The screen scrolls vertically, with your dragon flying either up or down depending on which way you're yanking the wibble stick. The four rails of the abacus on the right show dragon health, breath power, village



Definitely a novel way of clearing rainforests.

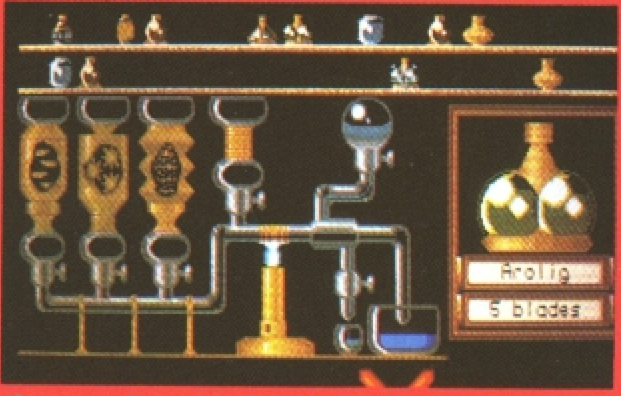
population and the technological sophistication of their defences. Aerial objects have to be burnt up at close range, the ground detail from a distance (dragon breath firing diagonally downwards, that makes sense).

Since losing dragons is bad news (it takes ages to incubate new ones) it's fortunate that you can quit the arcade sequence while the going's good. If you do die on either computer-controlled attacks or the shoot 'em up, you get taken to a nifty dead dragon screen featuring a bleeding dragon's head and an angst-ridden owner.

TALISMAN HUNTING

Because you're so busy burning up villages, increasing your income, countering opponents' activities and breeding dragons, there's little opportunity to search for talisman pieces in the early stages. When other players are out of the game, there's the chance to send out dragons on search missions. The fragments may be in open country or villages, so there's a vast area to scour. Once you've found them, you need at least three dragons to guard the bits of talisman, at which point you get transported to the Throne Room. And the secret of immortality is... *(Snip. Ed.)*

A SPELLING LESSON



This is where you rediscover your long lost skills, developed at the age of six with a Merit Chemistry Set. Alchemy's the same, only slower and a lot more difficult.

Looking at the screen, you can see the ingredients on the shelf. Click on and you get a picture of the bottle. They can be added through the apparatus on the left: either cut, ground, mixed or as they are. In addition, the bunsen burner and condenser may be turned on before you bung in the ingredients.

As you can imagine, the ingredients have different effects depending on how they are added. Some may have a negative effect if ground but positive if cut and so on. The same goes for the burner and condenser. All the information about effects is collated in the *Dragon's Breath* spell book; and it takes a good 15 minutes to work out a single recipe.

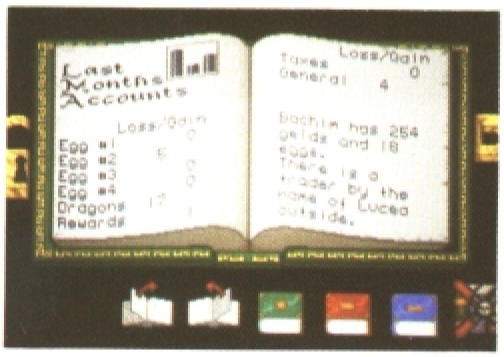
Each ingredient may be added either as Director or Affector. Director material aims the spell at either a village, a dragon, an egg or yourself. Affector material determines the characteristics of the spell; for example, you may add something to give strength, improve the mind or even lessen disease. Most chemicals have both positive and negative effects, so you have to balance everything out very carefully.

One warning: make a mixture too powerful and it explodes...

AT THE END OF THE DAY...

As I explained earlier, at first play *Dragon's Breath* seems vast in scope. But it's soon clear what's going on, although it never becomes simple. Unfortunately, the gameplay soon becomes repetitive. Every month you end up doing much the same: nurturing eggs, going on raids, keeping an eye on admin and casting spells. Whether you'll enjoy the magic system depends on your patience. The initial excitement of creating recipes soon became a drag in my case, but the system at least gives infinite possibilites.

The graphics are bootiful throughout, with a conscientious eye for detail. More animation would have been good but I s'pose you can't have everything. *(Unless you're Paul Getty. Ed.)* Sound is also of the quality you'd expect of the Amiga: the music is as atmospheric as the rumblings of the plumbing when the heat is cranked up in the hatchery.



Mmm, it's time for some hot hatching.

However, there is one major flaw to gameplay in *Dragon's Breath*: disk accessing. Virtually every time you click on an icon to go elsewhere, it has to load all the screen data. It takes between about two and ten seconds depending on the screen, but in total you probably spend more time waiting than playing because it happens so often. Yep, that's the price you have to pay for visual glory. If you happen to have the patience of Job, it may not bother you. But it sent me to sleep. "Let's look in the library." Click, whirr. "The green book." Click whirr... you get the picture – in both senses. There's not much disk juggling (plus there's a two drive option) but it hardly improves matters.

Strategy buffs will probably enjoy *Dragon's Breath*. And if graphics tickle your fancy, it could come high on the shopping list. But if you can't stand the waiting, then get out of the hatchery...

THE VERDICT

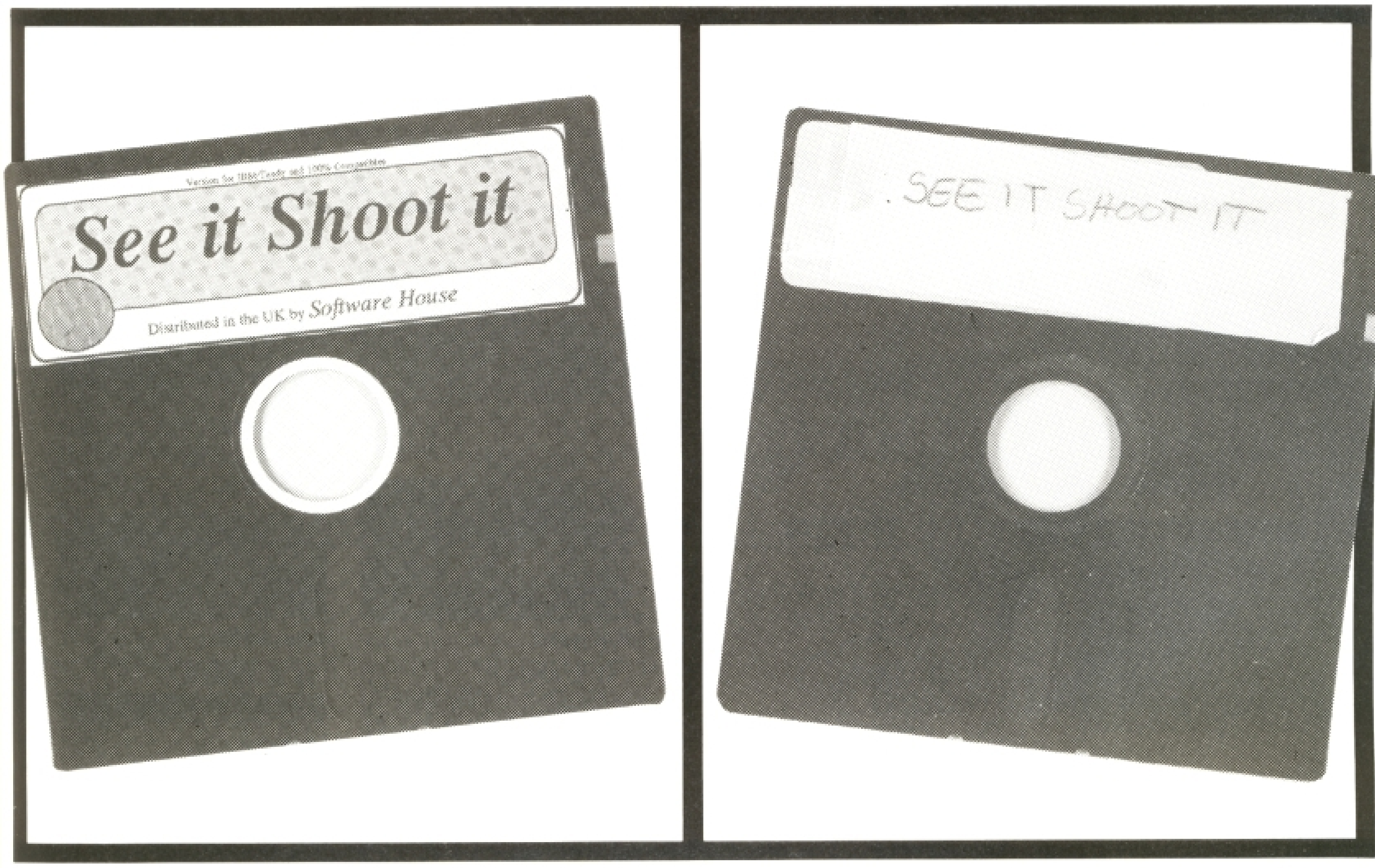
G	GRAPHICS	89
S	SOUND	94
A	ADDICTIVENESS	81
E	EXECUTION	71

Scale: 20 · 40 · 60 · 80 · 100

Stunning graphics, well structured gameplay, unfortunately marred by an infuriating amount of disk accessing.

78

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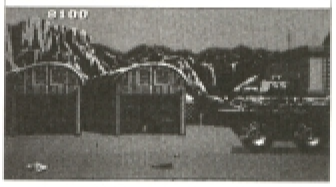
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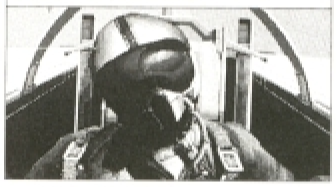
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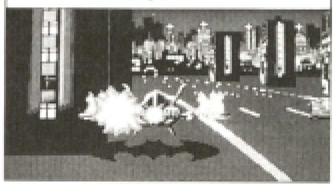
Operation Thunderbolt

ALL FORMATS



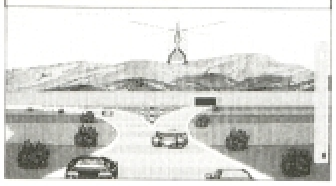
F-29 Retaliator

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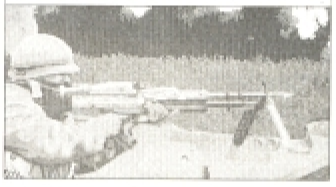
Batman

ST & AMIGA



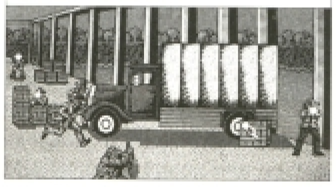
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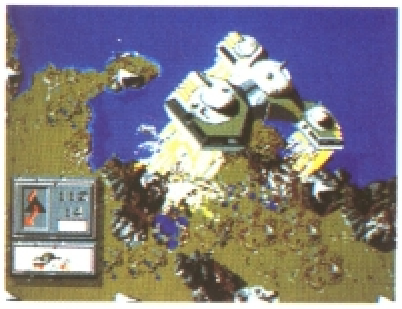
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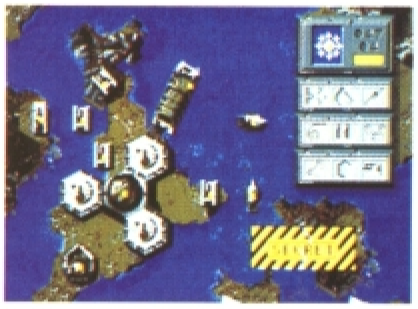
In a previous campaign, this attack boat got stranded on a reef ; now is it abandoned : "The ore goes first !"

ore, disintegrate or get hold of the precious equipment of the rival companies and, if possible, capture their own



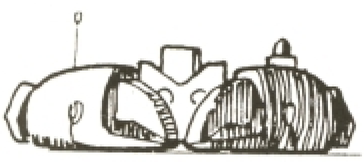
The ultimate flood. Though a turret is destroyed, this space-ship of the TATOU Consortium manages to lift off.

spaceship bursting with ore. Under your command a whole steel armada : barges, attack boats, tanks (amongst them the famous T99 known as the "Big Heap"), transporter crabs and the unique "Weather Hen". This extraordinary machine, the technological pride and joy of Ludodelirium Motors & Co., is able to transform the ore into material. Not



Isolated by the high tide, with its defenders neutralized, the "Delirium galaxy" may be your next victim.

only that, it also foresses the changing tides. On Full Metal Planete ignoring the rising tide means foolhardiness. How easily your attack boats could



get stuck or your tanks flooded in the next turn !



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A situation overview appears on the radar screen. Beware of threatening "Black Star" ! What about an alliance ?



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RISK



Do you know how many people now own a *Risk* set? Well nor did we but someone once told us and we were surprised. *Paul Lakin* packed his *Wilfred "Happy" Owen Book Of Poems* and Bully Beef and trolled off to conquer.

***Risk* is a pleasant surprise as a strategy game in that it's extremely easy to play. The board takes the form of a map of the world, with players taking it in turns to place their soldiers on one country each until all are occupied. Then players reinforce various garrisons until they've used up all their forces. The wrong decision on troop placement in these early stages can mean the war is lost before it even starts.**

Once battle has commenced then the aim is to overrun everything you don't already own. But this is not a time to throw caution to the wind. Seizing a whole continent may boost the number of reinforcements you receive at the end of your turn but might stretch your armies so thinly that you're vulnerable to the counter attack. One moment the world is within your grasp, the next you're having to make do with a small retire-ment cottage on the East Sussex coast. War is cruel.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Risk
PUBLISHER	Leisure Genius
PRICE	Amiga/ST £19.95
	PC £24.95
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Mid February

PC

Paul: There's nothing I like doing better on a morning then dabbling in a bit of world domination. Unfortunately, the price of a large modern army can be rather prohibitive these days and the bank has refused to cash the cheque I wrote for 35 armoured personnel carriers. Since then I've had to confine my world conquests to the *Risk* board. Then I heard it was being converted onto 16-bit. Gimmee, gimmee I cried. *(He's greedy like that. Ed.)*

Risk is probably not the most demanding game ever put onto a computer. After all, logically it's not many stages up from computer chess and less graphically demanding. However there's more to conversions than just the rules. It's important to capture the spirit as well as the rules of a game and fortunately Leisure Genius has managed to do both.

HASSLE FACTOR : 2

Keyboard cursor control is a mite fiddly at times.

The screen is an accurate representation of the *Risk* board with a world map that's designed for playability rather than geographic accuracy. Even in the great days of the British Empire, I'm sure dear old Blighty was never *that* big.

Risk is more than a game: it's four or five games, actually. Players have a choice of US or UK rules and a long or short game. You even have the opportunity to constuct your own version of the rules, mixing US with UK, long with short and adding a little dash of yourself. Shake thoroughly and stand well back.

To make it all more interesting, particularly when playing against the computer, Leisure Genius have added a neutral player. This fence sitter starts off with one third of the territory on the board but plays only a defensive role. It'll never attack your territory but will fight to the death to defend its own. If at the start of a go the neutral player is entitled to reinforcements because of the land it holds, you and your opponent take it in turns to place them. So you can use the neutral player to block your opponent's advance, or your own if you're not thinking.

INTERESTING RISK FACT

A silly group whose name begins with R, quite possibly the Ramones, once recorded a song about Risk. It wasn't terribly good.

Apart from this useful addition, the game is a faithful reproduction of the original, so what's the point? Obviously writing the number of your soldiers is more convenient than trying to balance 75 little bits of green plastic on a map of Iceland. Conversely its a lot easier (and more fun) to say "Ha-ha I'm attacking China from Siam, prepare to eat mud, pig dog" than fiddle about with the cursor trying to select the right country. But sadly a computer generated dice throw is strangely dull compared to watching a wooden cube rolling across the table, onto the floor and getting stuck in the soggy dog biscuit under the side board.

Although the computer game offers little that you can't already find on the board game, this is undoubtedly an excellent conversion, capturing the spirit and the strategy of the original.

GRAPHICS	80	ADDICTIVENESS	88
SOUND	60	EXECUTION	92
OVERALL	88		



1 The game starts and the world's your oyster. Right. Eeny meeny...



2 Africa, South America, Southern Europe. Mine, mine, all mine!



3 Oh, dear. Well, we'll just have to fight them on the beaches, I suppose...



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THE PRICE I$ RIGHT

BARGAINS! BARGAINS! BARGAINS! *Sean Kelly* checks out three of the latest goodies to appear on the shelf labelled 'rather good games with a somewhat diminutive price-tag'.

ADVANCED SKI SIMULATOR

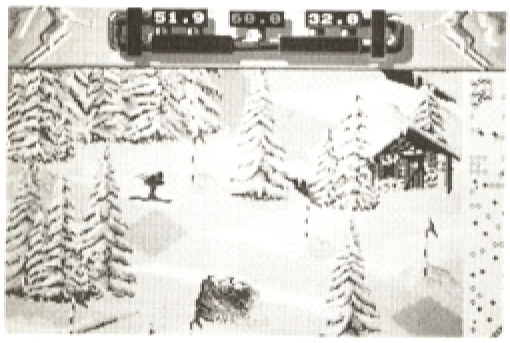
Codemasters/£4.99

This one's a sort of 'budget re-release of a title that was supposedly budget in the first place but was a bit too dear for budget in the end'. Got that? Well, it came out on Amiga about a year and a half ago but at £14.99 wasn't much of a bargain. Now it's on ST as well and it costs a fiver! There. Much clearer.

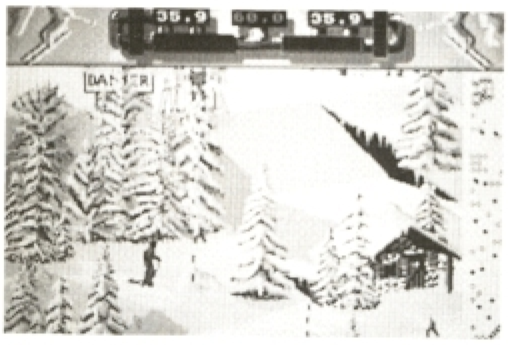
As you've sussed from the title, we're talking about a skiing game here. It's downhill slalom racing all the way against the computer or a friend and unfortunately there's not much else to it. *Advanced Ski Simulator* is playable and a tiny bit addictive, but it's almost as if the Codies have taken a single event from an Epyx title and put that on sale; there's just simply not enough here to keep you coming back to it and interest wears off very quickly.

Clever graphics, good sound but ultimately not enough variety and gameplay to get you hooked. Pity really, 'cos there's nothing I like better than a good night out on the piste.

OVERALL SCORE 60



Aaah! Feel the wind in your hair! That refreshing Alpiney smell as the forest whizzes by. Why, close your eyes and it's almost as if you were at home in the bog.



Blimey! The cramp is playing up. Perhaps I'll stop off at that rather good hostelry on the way down. Don't like the look of the cops by the danger sign though.

ALADDIN'S MAGIC LAMP

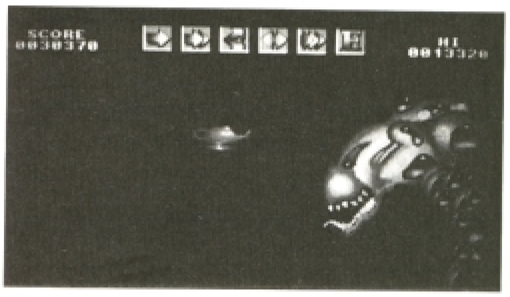
New Line Software/£9.99

Now correct me if I'm wrong, but we've been a bit bereft of software from Norway recently. Not exactly a hotbed of rabid coding, to be honest. Now it's become a sort of lukewarmish bed of coding with the formation of New Line Software, *Aladdin* being their first release.

It's a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, in which you control Aladdin's lamp (don't ask me, I don't write the scenarios) as it blasts away aiming to rescue some princess. Graphics are a mixture of raytracing and the more usual sort of sprites and surprisingly the mix works well. The backgrounds are universally dull, but this doesn't make much difference to the gameplay. Sound comprises a few chunky samples which unfortunately are really nothing to write home about.

Definitely a budget product, the game is unusual and has it's share of niggly problems. That said, *Aladdin* is also addictive and certainly a passable way of wasting a few hours.

OVERALL SCORE 69



TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY

Codemasters/£4.99

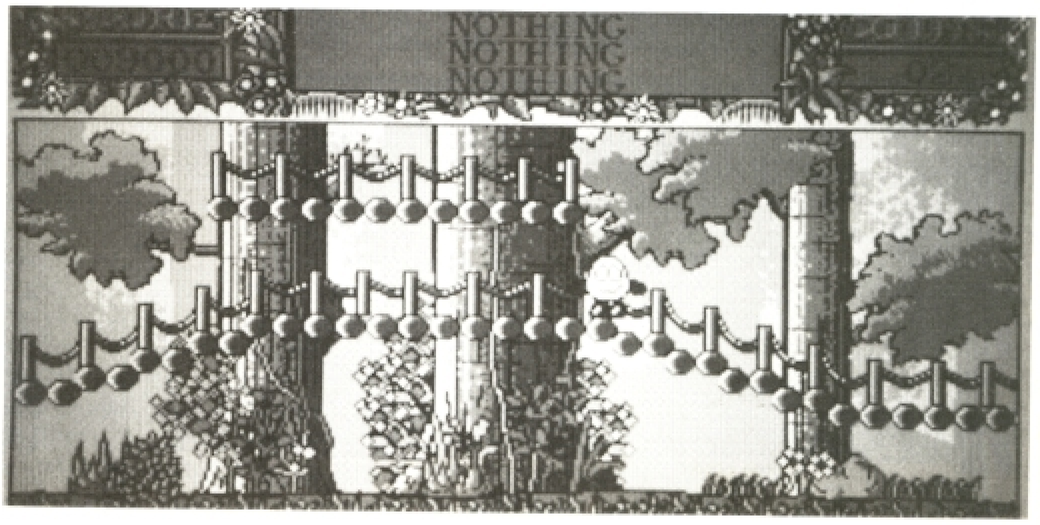
Dizzy is, you may be mildly interested to know, an egg with legs and a facile grin. After taking a trip with Long John Silver Cruises, he finds himself in eggxile, stuck on an island with not even an Egg Friday for company. Being an eggstrovert, he doesn't want to be alone forever so he begins to plan his eggscape. (*That's enough egg yokes. Ed.*) He notices, however, that there are gold coins scattered across the island and being a greedy eg... (*...Snip. Ed.*) he decides to blag as many as possible before making good his escape.

First things first though and I'll begin by refuting the daft quotes which the Codie munchkins insist on putting on all their packaging. *Treasure Island Dizzy* does not, as the box claims, have 'probably the best graphics, sound and gameplay you will ever see on the Amiga or ST'. The graphics are cartoony and certainly well drawn, more than adequate yes, but not stunning. Similarly sound is good enough, but nothing more. Gameplay fares better however, because *Dizzy* is actually a pretty good arcade adventure which can trace it's roots all the way back to *Jet Set Willy*.

It's got its annoying parts, like just one life which means you've got to solve the whole thing in one go or begin right at the start when you die. And you know what a pain this is. You will also often be killed without any warning whatsoever, which is just as annoying.

Not bad for a fiver and no doubt younger 16-bit owners will get more than their money's worth from it.

OVERALL SCORE 78




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DOSH EATERS

ARCADE EXPO

Bit of a spesh this issue. Every year the Amusement Trades Exhibition International takes place in London and all the newest coin-ops are on show to distributors, some of them months before they hit the arcades. *Sean Kelly* spent a day checking them all out on free play. Journalism can be hell sometimes.



Another rider gets in your way. Pity they left out a front mounted machine gun in the 'realism' stakes.



The sit-down version of *Line Of Fire*, with the totally brilliant double-handed machine gun. This one is going to be absolutely massive when it hits the arcades.

It's been said that there are only about three arcade game types in the whole world. I suspect that these categories could be identified as 'gimmicky', 'derivative' and 'crap' – and they all turned up at this years ATEI show. Loads of companies were showing new machines, so this is just a quick guide to some of the biggies and some that are tipped to be the money grabbers this summer.

The best game at the show is a new SEGA game called **Line Of Fire**. Put simply, it's an *Operation Thunderbolt* derivative. Personally I thought that *Op. Thunderbolt* had done all that could be done in this style, but **Line Of Fire** goes about ten steps better. It's a two player jobbie and there are two basic models; firstly the sit down version (pictured) with those totally brilliant two-handed machine guns with unlimited bullets and five grenades; secondly, an upright model, with the more usual *Thunderbolt* style machine guns.

Forget the plot and everything else because it's irrelevant. All you need to know is that there's absolutely loads to shoot and as fast as possible. There are some fantastic graphics and sonics throughout the game. There are also, perhaps surprisingly, some rather excellent original ideas thrown in. I can't recommend it enough to any arcade freaks; it's awesome. It's going to be massive, probably the biggest game this Summer and almost as certainly a massive 16-bit hit next Christmas.

Sega were also showing **Shadow Dancer**, a pretty impressive *Dragon Ninja* type game in which you are aided in bashing the terrorists at an airport by a massive dog/wolf animal thingy that turns into a puppy every time it gets a good kicking. Derivative but good fun to play, it will have its fair share of followers. A new game called **Bloxeed** was also being shown by Sega, which was a pretty dull *Tetris* rip-off with, as far as I could see, no redeeming features.

Atari Games were showing two machines which are brand new in the U.K. The best was **KLAX**, another variation on the *Tetris* theme. There are five 'lanes' down which coloured bricks tumble randomly towards your 'flipper', which can hold about four bricks at a time. The coloured bricks must be flipped onto one of five stacks and certain configurations formed to score, for example, three bricks in a row either diagonally, vertically or horizontally.

Once a formation is achieved, the bricks in that formation will disappear, leaving you more room – pretty much like *Tetris*. Bonuses are awarded occasionally, depending on how few bricks you have in your stacks. It was too much like *Tetris* for my liking but no doubt it will develop a cult following just as soon as it hits the arcades.

Atari were also showing **Badlands** which is very much like an enhanced version of *Super Cars*, the Gremlin game reviewed in the last issue. Like *Supersprint*, it really comes into its own with two players, but other than that I



This is the prototype of Taito's *GWP*, which was at the show. Needless to say, it's brilliant.



***GWP* – the safe way to race 'á la Barry Sheene'!**

didn't think there was anything too special about it.

The Konami biggies this year were **Aliens** and **Gradius III**. **Aliens** (the game of the movie) is a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, with a figure strolling along blasting everything that moves. He (well it didn't look like Ripley to me, that's for sure) is attacked by loads of fully grown aliens, plus the little scuttley face-sucker ones. At the end of each section of course there's the massive monster, the first of which chucks alien eggs at you. It's brilliant and has some really nice touches. This is another one which will be huge in the arcades and absolutely massive when it hits the home machines. **Gradius III** was a little disappointing, to be honest, being for my money a fairly unspectacular *R-Type* derivative. It had some good original graphics but was let down by dodgy gameplay. That said, I'm sure it will develop a large following.



***Klax*, already snapped up by Domark before it's even hit the arcades, has one visitor puzzling. Fortunately he has a glass of, erm... water on hand to cool him down.**

Another game which will have its followers, provided it makes it into enough arcades, is the massive **Fourtrax Racing** by Namco. As you'll see from the photograph, there are four motorbikes, each with their own screen. This way, up to eight people can race each other simultaneously (presumably by means of two sets linked), each seeing the race from their own perspective. The competition takes place around a dirt track on 'sand buggy' style tricycles and although I didn't get the chance to have a go (not having three friends with me and, er.. due to the big bully boys hogging it), but it looks absolutely brilliant.

Another 'sit on and race' motorbike game was **GWP** by Taito. This is much in the *Monaco Grand Prix* mould but without the cars. It's on a grand scale and thoroughly brilliant to play. The other bikers are huge and instead of just tilting the onscreen biker as you corner, (à la *RVF*) the whole track tilts left or right, giving the 'correct' view. Once it makes it into the arcades, probably in the Spring sometime, it's going to be another huge game.

Very much 'on display' was **Beast Busters**, the latest SNK game. This is another *Thunderbolt* derivative, but with the novel twist of three guns and thus three simultaneous players. Lots of horrible beasties and ghosties leap out of the screen at you and must be blasted to oblivion as fast as possible. Hmmm... sounds to me like the plot of a movie's been cribbed...

Another game which was being tipped by many to be amongst the big money earners this Summer was **Final Fight**, the latest beat 'em up from Capcom. Personally, I didn't like it much, there being nothing spectacularly original about it. That having been said, it was attracting an enthusiastic crowd and I don't expect that it'll be any different in the arcades.

Puzznic, by Taito, also seemed to crop up all over the show. It's a puzzle game which I must admit I didn't get a chance to try out. This one will again probably develop its own following amongst those looking for a change from joystick thrashing. There was also **World Cup Soccer '90**, a fast and addictive erm... soccer game.



***Fourtrax Racing* by Namco. Complete with bouncy grindy seats for 'realism'. Dirt track racing against friends and enemies alike guarantees hours of fun, providing you've all got a huge arcade budget.**

Overall then, nothing incredibly original but some excellent progressions along familiar lines. Hopefully next year we might see something fresh and new but with my luck, it'll more than likely be *Line Of Fire II* and *Gradius IV*. Still, who am I to complain? STOP

review

DRIVIN' FORCE

What with Dunc making Brrm Brrrm noises in the office doing the driving feature, *Paul Lakin* was beginning to feel a bit left out. To cheer him up we gave him a tin of Castrol GTX and a copy of *Drivin' Force*.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Some waiting about but nothing unbearable.



Driving games come, driving games go but driving games undoubtedly sell. Digital Magic Software's long awaited addition to a lucrative market comes with not only a variety of tracks but also vehicles. As well as the usual motorbikes, racing cars and Porsche-type-things-with-blondes there are slightly more eccentric vehicles like large lorries.

In the league you race on all the tracks in random order until your consistant seventh place in the table begins to depress you.

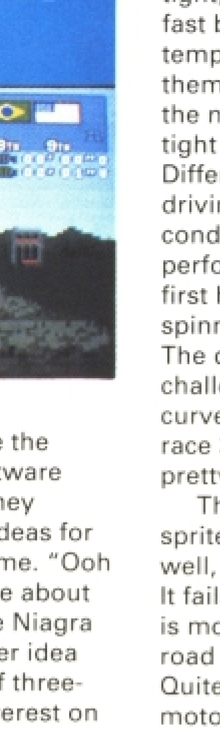
The knock-out compo lets you work through the tracks in order of difficulty but kicks you out on your butt if you ever fail to finish in the first three. Right so you've chosen your vehicle and the first track's loaded. Now strap on your Yorkie bar and let's go.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Drivin' Force
PUBLISHER	Digital Magic Software
PRICE	Amiga/PC £24.95 ST £19.95
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Amiga out now ST February PC April

Paul: Imagine the scene in a software company as they grapple with ideas for their latest game. "Ooh let's do a game about going over the Niagra in a barrel." "No I've got a better idea let's do a game about a team of three-toed sloths racing up Mount Everest on pogo sticks." "Ah stuff it, let's do another driving game."

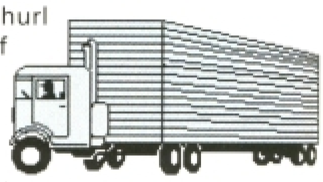
It must be as difficult thinking of new things to do with driving games as it is to think of new things to write about them. Digital Magic Software have come up with a couple of sharp ideas for the former, I'm still struggling with the latter so that's one up to them.



At first glance *Drivin' Force* doesn't look all that new. Just another *Power Drift*, I thought, nothing new here. Actually *Drivin' Force* is a fair bit faster than *Power Drift* and quite a bit different. Unfortunately the similarity is in the look of the track. I'm not a fan of these games where you appear to be driving over a line of logs. They're not exactly detailed and are inclined to go a bit peculiar at crucial moments. On really tight corners you're faced with a blur of colours in the midst of which there should be a road. Some of the opposition also look more like screen blips than serious rivals.

What makes *Drivin' Force* a little bit different is that rather than offer you a choice of drivers, like some games, it offers you a choice of vehicles. It's quite an impressive choice too. Lorries, beach buggies and the like are all well drawn, colourful and detailed. My only complaint is why, oh why is it only the flash sports car drivers who ever have a partner in these games? Do girls only make passes at boys in Ferraris?

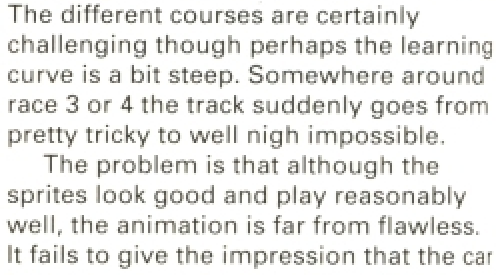
The sprites not only look good they all handle slightly differently. The buggies bounced along and held on tight, the motorbikes were mean and fast but were unable to resist the temptation to hurl themselves off the nearest tight corner. Different driving conditions are also reflected in the performance of the vehicles. (i.e. at the first hint of any ice my car started spinning towards the nearest obstacle.) The different courses are certainly challenging though perhaps the learning curve is a bit steep. Somewhere around race 3 or 4 the track suddenly goes from pretty tricky to well nigh impossible.



The problem is that although the sprites look good and play reasonably well, the animation is far from flawless. It fails to give the impression that the car is moving over the road, instead the road seems to be moving under the car. Quite often, particularly with the motorbike, all the vehicle seemed to do was lean from side to side a bit.

Crashing in this game is quite an experience. Instead of booms, crashes and lots of smoke the car bounces back off obstacles. This can be a problem if your limited turning circle gets you into a vicious circle of bouncing back, going forward and bouncing back off the same obstacle. Sometimes it helps to blow up.

Drivin' Force is a pretty good racing game which somehow falls short of being brilliant. It should hold its own in a crowded market but it's not going to set the world on fire.



Bonus level – a free ride on a water skateboard.

GRAPHICS 84	ADDICTIVENESS 82	OVERALL 85
SOUND 80	EXECUTION 85	

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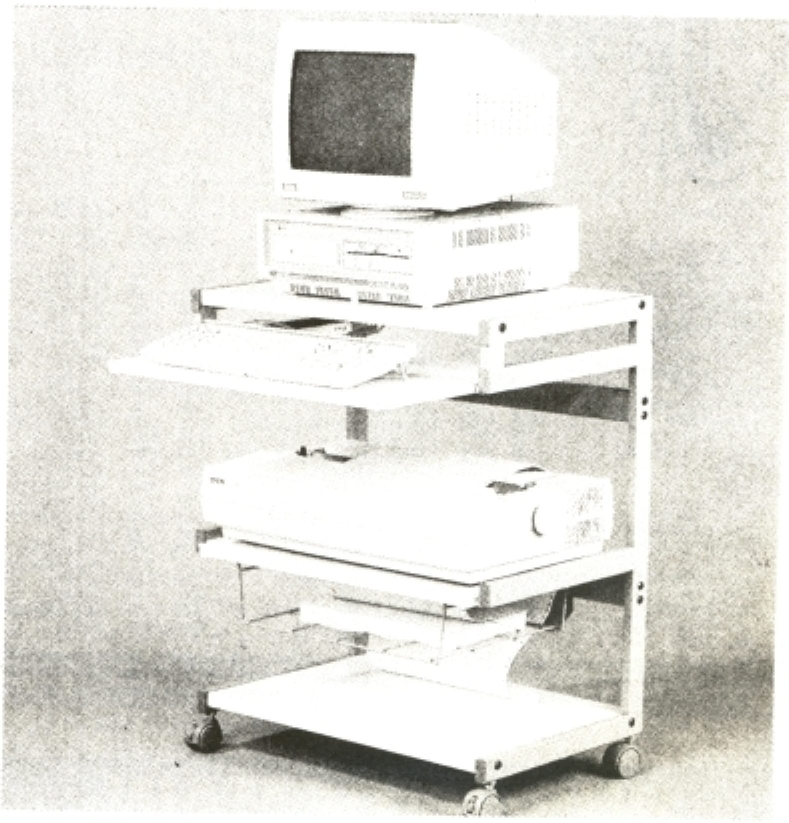
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GAME63 - KIDPUBLISHER, desk-top publishing for kids, (plus instructions for adults), great.
GAME38 - MISTER POTATO HEAD (kidpotato), JIGSAW, QUIZWIZ, STARCHART.
GAME19 - PICKPOCKET, BARNYARD, (for youngsters) and CRIBBAGE, the classic game.

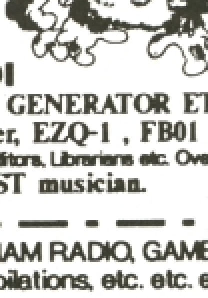
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DEM156- THE SKUZZ, brilliant AVS video animation and music, fabulous (1meg needed).
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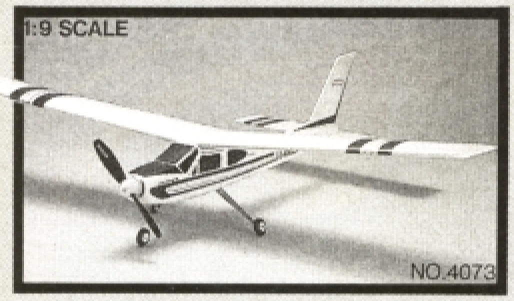
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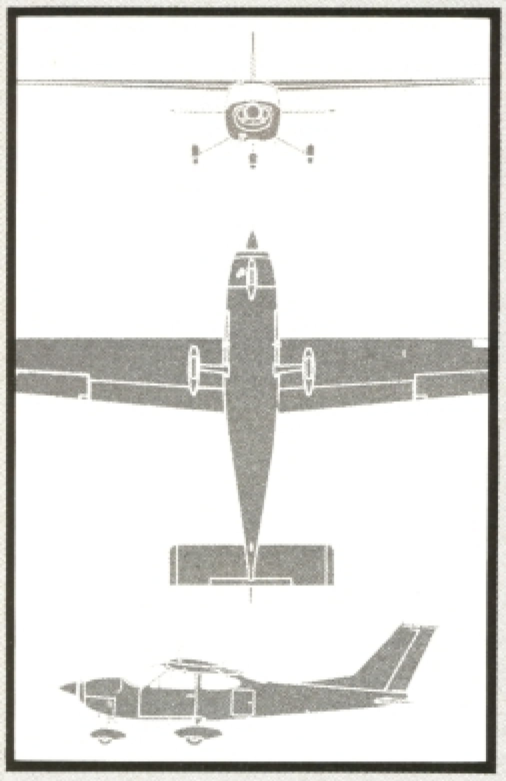
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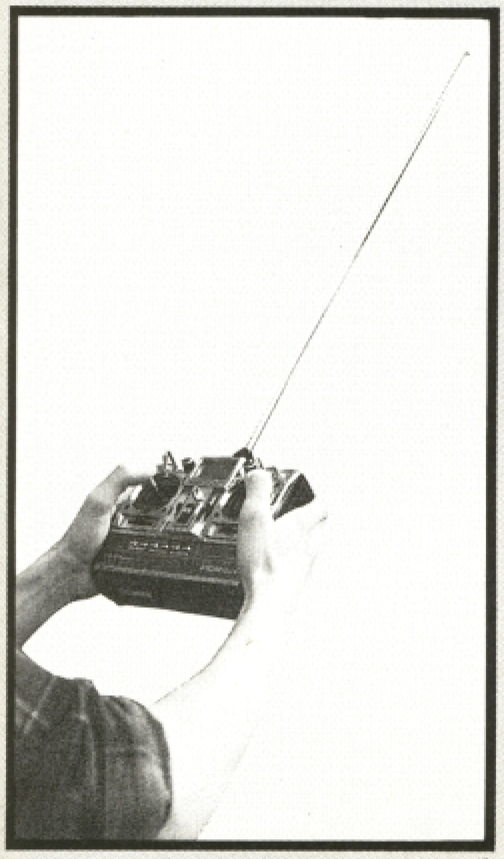
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All you have to do is match the real moniker of the aircraft below with its nickname. For example if you think that number one The Fairey Swordfish was known as a Flying Pencil then write Flying Pencil next to 1. on the form below. Then send this form flying off to **My Friends Already Call Me 'Biggles' Compo, ZERO Compos, PO Box 1509, Enfield, Middlesex EN1 1LQ.**

a Flying Pencil **b Flying Coffin** **c Stringbag** **d Flying Matchbox**


1 Fairey Swordfish


2 Dornier


3 Mosquito


4 F-111

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- **Employees of MicroProse or Dennis Oneshots are far too flight-wise to be allowed to enter.**
- **Entries received after 31st March 1990 will be made into paper airplanes and lobbed out of the office window.**
- **The Ed is a top flight dude so what he says goes.**

1 .... 3 ....

2 .... 4 ....

Name ....

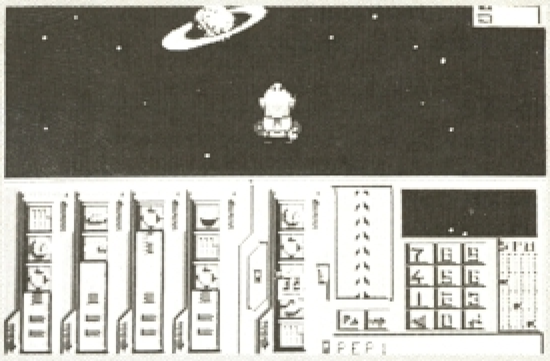
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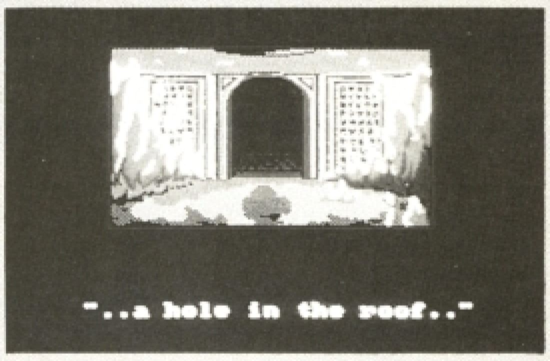
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SHORTS

So many games, so little time! But just for you we've got a complete list of everything you can get your hands on this month that we didn't manage to squeeze in reviews.



DARK CENTURY



DEMON'S TOMB



DUNGEON QUEST



WINDWALKER

AFTER THE WAR Dinamic
Scrolling bash, shoot and kick 'em up, much in the vein of *Dragon Ninja.*
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £19.99

AMARILLO SLIM'S REAL POKER: 5 CARD STUD Villa Crespo
Sophisticated poker game, possibly unique in that it doesn't contain any digitised pictures of bimbos in varying stages of undress.
Format: PC/Out now
Price: £24.99

BEVERLY HILLS COP Tynesoft
T'soft step into the film licensing arena with a collection of four games – including a competent *Hard Drivin'* lookalike – loosely linked by the plot of the *Beverly Hills Cop* movie and the Axel Foley character.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £24.99

DARK CENTURY Titus
Bizarre game involving ray traced monopod tanks and other such stuff.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £24.99

DEMON'S TOMB Melbourne House
Atmospheric graphic adventure from the chappies at Melbourne House.
Format: Amiga/ST/PC/Out now
Price: £19.99 (Amiga/ST), £24.99 (PC)

DOCTOR PLUMMET'S HOUSE OF FLUX Microillusions
An asteroid variant which could prove embarrassing, unless you ask for it verrry slowly.
Format: Amiga/Out now
Price: £24.99

DUNGEON QUEST Gainstar
Graphic adventure with attractive and atmospheric pictures.
Format: Amiga/Out now
Price: £24.95

FIFTH GEAR Hewson
View from above racing and shooting game, which is far from being Hewson's best hour by a long chalk.
Format: ST/Amiga/Out now
Price: £19.99

FIRST PERSON PINBALL Tynesoft
Totally ungood pinball game, with absolutely no redeeming features. Forget the first person aspect, it's totally irrelevant and naff.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £19.99

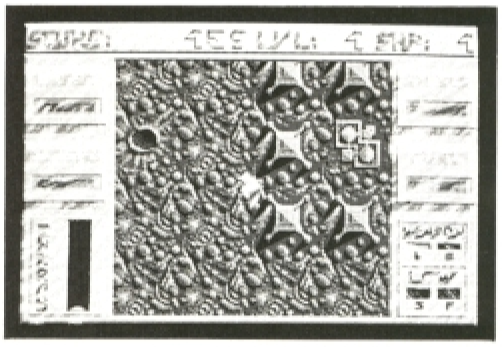
HARLEY DAVIDSON: THE ROAD TO STURGIS Mindscape
Gravy congealed in yer beard biker sim, complete with busty floozies and a series of scenarios.
Format: PC/Out now ST/Amiga soon
Price: £29.99(PC) £19.99 (ST/Amiga)

THE JETSONS Microillusions
Graphic adventure based around the exploits of Hanna Barbera's George Jetson.
Format: Amiga/Out now
Price: £24.99

NIGHT HUNTER UbiSoft
Yet another strange foreign game, this time involving vampires and werewolves and other such malarkey.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £24.99

RENAISSANCE Impressions
A collection of four of the 'Golden Oldies' from years ago, in their 'primitive' forms, plus updated remixes of each.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out Now
Price: £19.99

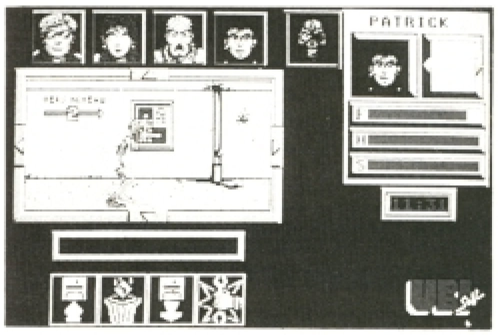
WARP Grandslam
Vertically scrolling shoot 'em up.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £24.99 (Amiga), £19.99 (ST)

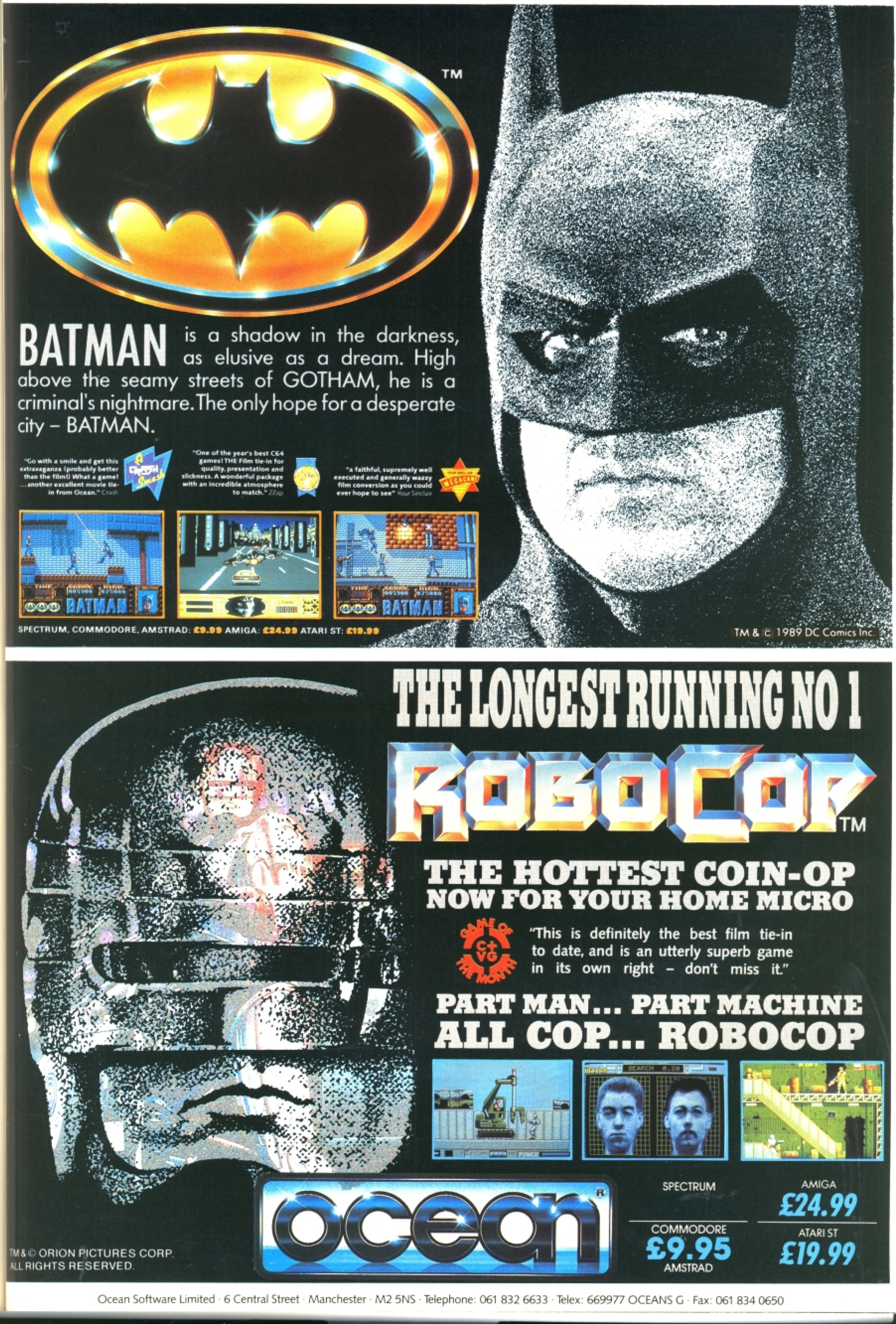


WILD STREETS Titus
Arcade style beat 'em up from the strange Frenchies.
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £24.99

WINDWALKER Origin
Strange *Exploding Fist* variant, which uses mouse commands rather than joystick. It also incorporates the old epic quest jobbie, with megaweird graphics that look like they were ported from a Commodore 64.
Format: Amiga/PC/Out now
Price: £24.99

ZOMBI UbiSoft
Yet another bizarre French game. The scenario comes in the form of a terribly drawn comic. The game involves escaping from a zombie plague... STOP
Format: Amiga/ST/Out now
Price: £24.99



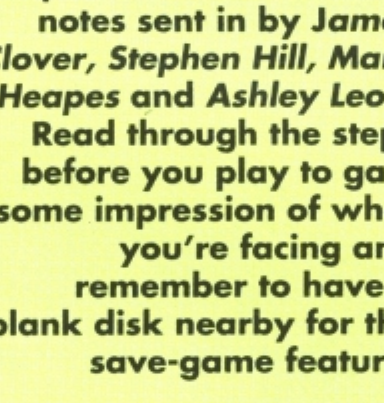

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CRYSTAL TIPS*

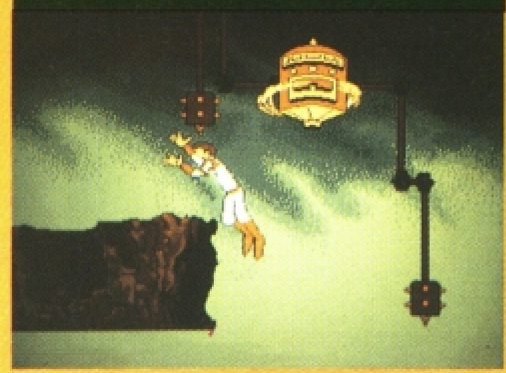
*AND ALISTAIR

SPACE AC

The world is split over *Space Ace*. Some see it as computer graphics pushed to their possible apex blah blah while others regard it as a gameless rip-off touched up by some pretty Disney drawings blah BLAH. But here on Mount Rathbone we can look down on these petty squabblings and see *Space Ace* for what it is – a game. So here's a comprehensive see-all-the-screens-and-go-cor! solution for it, a complilation of the sweaty notes sent in by *James Clover, Stephen Hill, Mark Heapes* and *Ashley Leon*. Read through the steps before you play to gain some impression of what you're facing and remember to have a blank disk nearby for the save-game feature.



SCENE 2



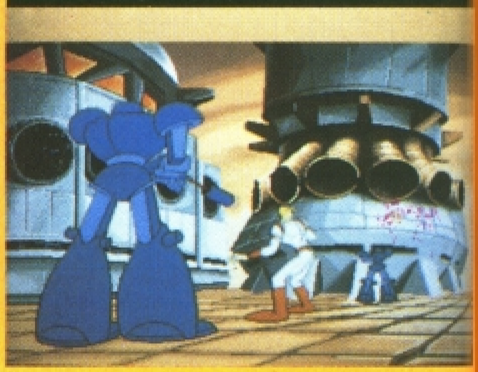
SCENE 4



SCENE 9



SCENE 15



SCENE 1: Okay, so this one's already been described in the manual, but you've probably lost it by now anyway. Big fat Borf fires his laser gun at the rocks around Dexter. Just after the second laser shot, move RIGHT and Dexter will leap lankily behind the large rock on the right. Borf will fire once more, hitting the top of the rock. Press LEFT immediately and Dexter will hurdle to the centre of the screen. Press DOWN straightaway and Dexter will seek cover behind the rock (cowardly behind-rock-cringer that he is).

SCENE 2: Phew! Those aerobics over, Dexter runs into the reach of a mining robot. Move RIGHT as soon as you enter the screen to avoid the machine's large blunt arm. Then move LEFT to make Dexter leap to the middle of the screen. The floor begins to crumble but wait for a count of three. One... two... three then press LEFT and he will vault decisively onto the last section of rock. He will loose his footing on the rock. Use the strange wirring sound as a cue and press LEFT to leap to safety.

SCENE 3: Move DOWN straightaway to avoid the robot's first volley, then when he reaches the second hillock, press UP to complete his escape.

SCENE 4: Dexter's ship arcs across the screen. Press UP the second before it reaches the domed building.

SCENE 5: We're back into no-man's land now. When the goofy Mud Monster appears, simply press FIRE to fry it. (TIP: Fry to 8-10 in hot oil with lychees and lentils for tastier effect. Yum.)

SCENE 6: Dexter is being pursued by a great big blunt instrument. Aaaahh! Press RIGHT instantly to make him stagger away, then UP so he leaps courageously to freedom. Hurrah!

SCENE 7: Dexter is faced with a big snooker cue end poking up between two cliffs (Freudian imagery if I ever saw it). Press RIGHT to leap onto the platform and then RIGHT again straightaway to hurdle to safety.

SCENE 8: Dexter sprints along a thin precipice and suddenly – urgh! A creepy slimey thing attacks him. Pull DOWN to stop him from careering into its sticky maw and then press RIGHT to slip escapingly away.

SCENE 9: The scene is the mirror image of the last one. When another horrible thing, equally creepy, slimey and sticky attacks, pull DOWN to stop and then LEFT to leap energetically out of range of its breath.

SCENE 10: This time, one of the purple-puke monsters (as I have christened them) grabs one of Dexter's lanky jambs (thats legs to you). Press FIRE to frazzzzzzzle it.

SCENE 11: The next scene shows Dexter poised indecisively before two tunnels. All manner of creepy crawly

ACE





★★★ ZERO ★★★
COMPLETE SOLUTION





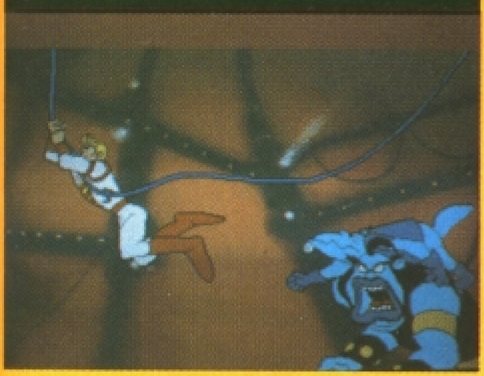
SCENE 5



SCENE 6



SCENE 27



SCENE 31



things are creeping and crawling all over the place. Wait til the two blue cats appear and then press UP.
SCENE 12: Dexter is sprinting down a corridor. Two dogs appear at either side. He freezes in horror, every ligament of his body stuck with terror. The dogs advance. Press UP so Dexter can find a toilet quickly.
SCENE 13: Dexter is still on the run. This time go RIGHT when he reaches the intersection.
SCENE 14: When Dexter reaches the middle of the screen and pauses heroically to flick a lock of hair off his sweaty forehead, press UP to leave the trailing dogs in the incineration trap. Woof! Woof! BOOM!
SCENE 15: Dexter is caught between two security robot's lasers. As they raise their weapons, press RIGHT to slip ethereally between the beams.
SCENE 16: Press LEFT to dodge the energy bolt.
SCENE 17: Press LEFT again to dodge the other energy bolt.
SCENE 18: Press RIGHT again to dodge yet another flippin' energy bolt.
SCENE 19: Dexter is approaching Borf's lair. Press UP as you approach the ladder to climb into the control centre.
SCENE 20: When Borf attacks, press FIRE to block his staff and then as he turns to kick Dexter press RIGHT to jump out of the way.
SCENE 21: Press FIRE to block Borf's staff.
SCENE 22: Press FIRE to block the staff, but he knocks Dexter to the ground. Press RIGHT to roll aside.
SCENE 23: Instantly press FIRE to block Borf's staff (again) and when he lashes out with his foot, press DOWN to duck beneath his leg.
SCENE 24: On your back (as per usual), press FIRE to block the advancing Borf.
SCENE 25: Borf attacks with his (surprise) staff. Press UP to jump over it and then DOWN straightaway to duck beneath it.
SCENE 26: When Borf attacks press RIGHT to run behind him and then press DOWN to leap on his back (steady).
SCENE 27: Little blue creature-gits will start to climb up Borf, trying to drag Dexter to their fat master. At the very last moment press LEFT to leap onto the rope.
SCENE 28: Let Dexter tumble onto the disc and then before the disc sinks beneath the lava, press RIGHT to jump to safety.
SCENE 29: Dexter is now found running along a path. To avoid the Infanto ray, press RIGHT when it strikes the path.
SCENE 30: Do the opposite this time, pressing LEFT when the ray hits the pathway.
SCENE 31: Now Dexter is sprinting down a path lined with mirrors ("I wonder what they can be used for?" he asks in a puzzled voice). Press RIGHT to leap out of the way again.
SCENE 32: As soon as you enter this screen press LEFT and then RIGHT to reflect the Infanto beam with the mirror and rejuvenate fatty Borf.

FREE GIFT

CHEATER'S DIGEST

The definitive A-Z of ZERO cheats and tips

We must be stark raving bonkers. Why? Because next month there'll be a little plastic bag on the cover. To your utter amazement, in it you'll find a 24 page directory of cheat modes in full colour. For absolutely nothing. Zilch. Totally and utterly FREE.

The shandymans guide to cheats, cowardice and low - alcohol beer has been lovingly compiled by Mr Crystal Tips himself, David "Macca" McCandless who has been chained to the office computers for the past few weeks. He likes that sort of thing.

FREE WITH THE NEXT ISSUE OF ZERO, OUT THURSDAY 8TH MARCH

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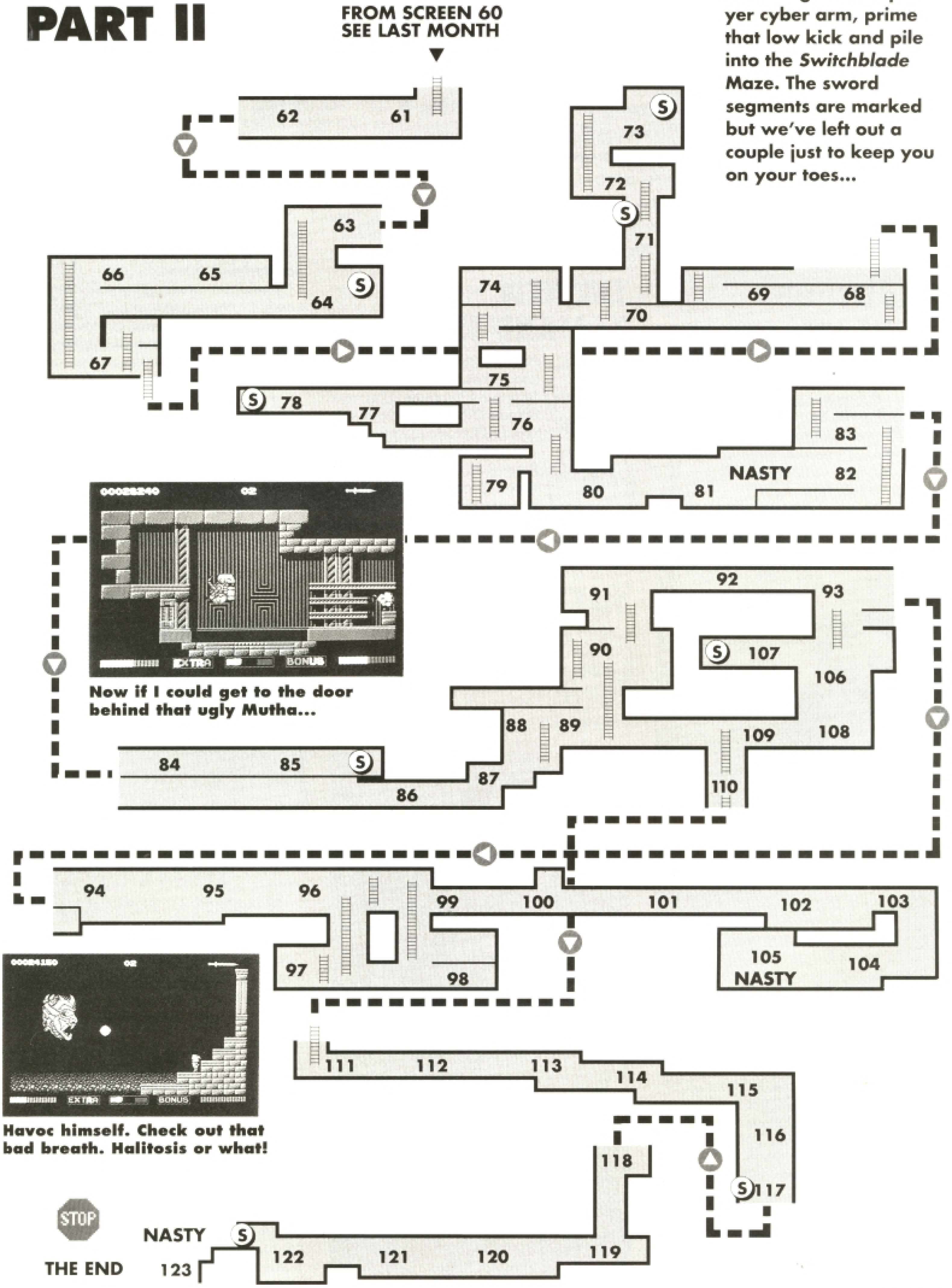
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SWITCHBLADE

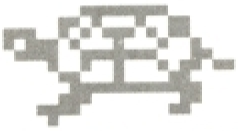
ZERO MAP PART II

It's that time of the month again. Strap on yer cyber arm, prime that low kick and pile into the *Switchblade* Maze. The sword segments are marked but we've left out a couple just to keep you on your toes...



Now if I could get to the door behind that ugly Mutha...

Havoc himself. Check out that bad breath. Halitosis or what!



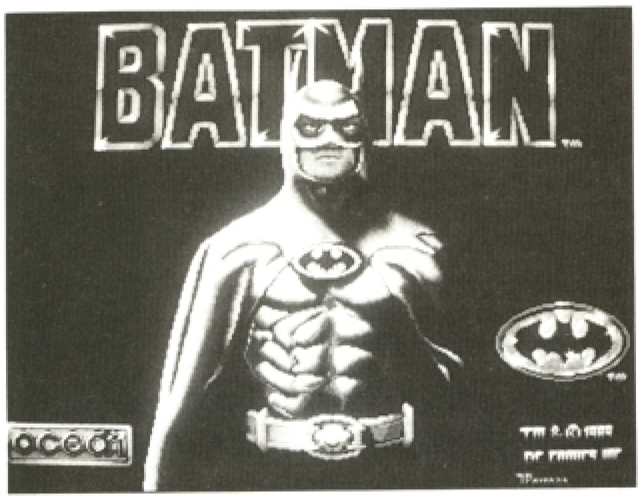
GUTLESS GULLY



Let's hope you turned to the wrong page by mistake. If you're a twenty-bottles-of-Newcastle-brown-before-breakfast kind of player, then turn over immediately. If, on the other hand, you break into a cold sweat when you load that game you've been playing for 10 hours without completing level one, then taking a trip down Gutless Gully could be right up your street. You wimp you.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Try holding down the fire button and the left mouse button together on the last intro screen until you're told to swop the disks. And lo and behold, you get infinite lives. Thanks to the cryptically-named **Crucial Graffix** for that one.



BATMAN THE MOVIE

If typing JAMMMM for infinite lives isn't enough, try then pressing F10 to skip levels. A very handy tip from **Mike Stennet**.

ROBOCOP

For the usual infinite lives, the thing to type is BEST KEPT SECRET whilst in pause mode. For this you can thank Mr No Fillings himself, **Matt Maclean**, who reminds us not to forget the spaces.

R-TYPE

To render yourself totally immortal, **Darren Purcell** suggests typing SUMITA. (including the .) onto the high score table.

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY

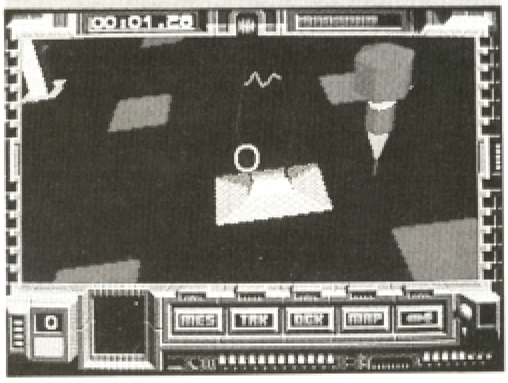
Right, to enable the cheat mode, bash in the following letters while on the title screen: DRATSABIWIKNEKC-UFREHTOM. Probably Icelandic or something. Note, however, that the letters should be entered in reverse order (M first and so on to D). You'll now have infinite lives and HELP will jump to the next level. Much obliged, **Pete - Baz**.

SILKWORM

On the keyboard/joystick selector screen, press F10, HELP and fire. Courtesy of **Matt Maclean** (again) you will now have infinite lives and keys 1 to = will select the level. Triff.

INTERPHASE

Type 'Fenny' (remembering to press the SHIFT button for the capital 'F') at any time whilst flying and watch what happens. After the message, click the left mouse button to cycle through the objects using the mouse to rotate them. Holding the right mouse button enables you to zoom in and out.



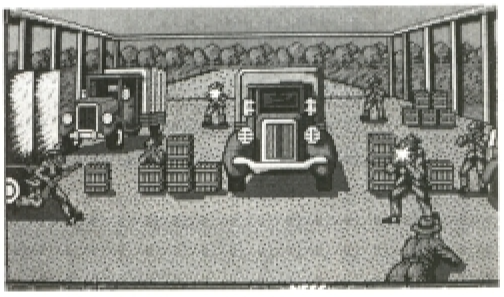
THE UNTOUCHABLES

On the first level, press F10 to pause the game. Type in BRIDGE ROLLS (including the space) to take you to the beginning of level two. On level two, pause, type MAC N ALLEY (including the spaces) and this will take you to level three.

If you're still having trouble after those two juicy cheats then you really ought to be drinking your pineapple, orange and coke cocktail through a bendy straw. For complete wimps among you, here are a few basic guidelines...

Level 1: The Warehouse

It goes without saying that you should duck to avoid bullets. Also try to anticipate the gangsters' and the ledger carriers' movements, being careful to stay in the green. Ammunition is limited, so resist the temptation to spray everything that moves. Pay particular attention to the Ledger Carrier because his shot gun blasts cannot be avoided and are fatal. He's a toughie so it'll take six shots to take him out.



Level 2: The Bridge

With little time and a lot of randomly appearing bottles to pick up there's no time for gawping at the scenery. Watch your energy, pick up First Aid quickly and don't take your finger off the trigger.

Level 3: The Alleyways

Keep switching between the Untouchables to save energy. Every shot must count, especially on Alley 8. Don't waste time.

Level 4: The Railway Station

Try different routes down the steps. Avoid bystanders as well the statues, handrails and fountain. Don't shoot the wrong people or let the gangsters shoot the baby.

Level 5: The Hostage

Aim for a head shot, be quick and anticipate the gunman's moves.

Level 6: The Rooftop

Shoot the plants, buckets, bottles and the cat for extra points. Keep reloading your gun and avoid being shot – it's fatal.

IMPROVE YOUR HEX LIFE!

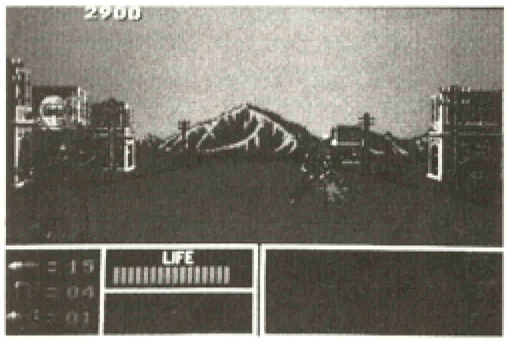
Let's face it, there's nothing like a good old POKE with your favourite hacker *Jon North*, is there?

I had hoped that with the turn of the decade I might see some pokes for machines other than the Amiga? (That was a *subtle* hint, in case you missed it.) Especially as I specifically asked Santa for some mail from ST and PC owners. Needless to say I no longer believe in Father Christmas (hem hem). So come on all you ST and PC peeps, you can do better than that, eh?

PACMANIA

The first airing for Freestyle U.K. this month comes from **Parallax**, who has done a little something for *Pacmania* – a big something even. In fact, a something so big it gives infinite lives. Reset the machine once you've RUN it.

```
10 REM Pacmania by Parallax
20 FOR F=523776 TO 523854 STEP 2
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$):POKEW F,A
40 NEXT F:C=523776:CALL C
50 DATA 2C79,0,4,207C,FE,88C0,43F9,7,F000,303C,145,12D8
60 DATA 51C8,FFFC,22FC,DBFC,0,22FC,7E,4E5D,32BC,4E75
70 DATA 4EB9,7,F01A,41FA,A,2948,15A,4EEC,C,4DF9,0,4C00
80 DATA 33FC,591E,0,D34E,4ED6,0
```



OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

Hurrah! Thanks go to **Mark Laurence** from Basildon who has supplied us with infinite lives for *Operation Thunderbolt*. Well done.

```
10 DIM CODE%(255)
20 FOR N=0 TO 95
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$)
40 CODE%(N)=A
50 NEXT N
60 CHEAT=VARPTR (CODE%(0))
65 CALL CHEAT
100 DATA 7OFF,2C78,0004,4EAE,FEB6,2200,5280,6772
110 DATA 4BFA,OOEE,3AFC,0400,429D,3AC1,93C9,4EAE
120 DATA FEDA,2ACO,2A8D,2B4D,0008,589D,4295,4BFA
130 DATA 0090,1ABC,0005,3B7C,0030000A,41ED,0038
140 DATA 2B48,0006,41FA,0060,7000,7200,43FA,006A
150 DATA 4EAE,FE44,4A80,662A,700C,99CC,6126,7002
160 DATA 49F9,0007,0000,611C,397C,5340,0030,297C
170 DATA 343C,4A69,0032,297C,31C2,73BA,0054,4EEC
180 DATA 000C,4E75,43FA,0032,3340,001C,234C,0028
190 DATA 42A9,002C,237C,0000,0400,0024,337C,0030
200 DATA 0012,4EEE,FE38,7472,6163,6B64,6973,6B2E
210 DATA 6465,7669,6365,0000,0000,0000,0000,0000
```

ALTERED BEAST

Will you welcome to these pages (again), **Frostbyte** from Freestyle U.K. Apparently he writes demos when he's not writing trainers and pokes, so look out for some of their stuff in the P.D. (if that's where they leave it). In the meantime, here's infinite lives for both players.

```
10 REM Altered Beast by Frostbyte
20 FOR F=520192 TO 520448 STEP 2
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$): POKEW F,A
40 NEXT F:C=520182:CALL C
50 DATA 303C,1800,51C8,FFFE,4E75,21FC,7,F008,20,46FC,2000
60 DATA 2C3C,5555,5555,45F9,DF,F024,47F9,BF,D100,357C,7FF
70 DATA 72,16BC,7A,893,3,893,0,8D3,0,61C0,82B,4,F01,66EE
8C DATA 283C,0,B000,7E2C,853,2,660E,893,1,893,0,8D3,0,619C
90 DATA 41F9,7,8000,357C,2,78,2548,FFFC,357C,4489,5A,357C
100 DATA 9500,7A,357C,8210,72,34BC,4000,34BC,9B06,34BC,9B06
110 DATA 82A,1,FFFB,67F8,700A,C58,4489,66FA,C50,4489,6602
120 DATA 5488,2218,2418,C286,C486,D281,8282,281,0,FF00,D281
130 DATA D284,2241,41E8,30,727F,2428,200,2618,C486,C686
140 DATA D683,8483,22C2,51C9,FFEE,51C8,FFBE,684,0,1600,5347
150 DATA 6600,FF66,357C,2,78,34BC,4000,16BC,FB,16BC,86,33FC
160 DATA 602C,1,2FB6,4EF9,5A45,524F
```

IDIOT'S GUIDE

Are you an idiot? Are you in need of a guide? Answer yes to both questions and you've found the right bit...

Load Workbench, then put the Extras disk in, load AmigaBASIC, slap in the listing exactly as it appears here (save it for later if you want), then insert the original disk and RUN the listing. When you put the game disk in, ignore any requesters you might get – it's simply because the disk is protected. Follow any other instructions in the introduction to each hack (like resetting the machine or whatever).

OPERATION WOLF

Here's **Andy the Arfling** (who did *High Steel* ST for issue one amongst other things), who's cracked *Oppo Wolf* and got 255 magazines and grenades out of it.

Slap this into AmigaBasic and RUN it with the original disk in the drive. Now reset the machine to load.

```
10 REM Operation Wolf by A.T.A.
20 FOR F=520192 TO 520314 STEP 2
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$): POKEW F,A
40 NEXT F:END
50 DATA 41FA,1E,227C,7,FF50,303C,19,22D8,51C8,FFFC,23FC,7
60 DATA FF50,0,68,4E75,48E7,C006,4BFA,22,2D4D,2E,4BEE,22
70 DATA 7016,D25D,51C8,FFFC,4641,3D41,52,4CDF,6003,4E73
80 DATA 4E71,4E71,48E7,6,2C79,0,4,42AE,2E,4BFA,E,23CD,0
90 DATA 68,4CDF,6000,4E75,33FC,FF,3,6F58,33FC,FF,3,6F56
100 DATA 4EF9,FC,CA6,5A45,524F,3839
```

Well, at least it was a bit longer than last month's! My best regards go to the Freestyle bunch yet again, but I'm sure you – yes *you* – could do just as well, if not better. So show the world how good you are and WIN A FREEBIE! Any non-Freestyle hacker who gets their work on this page from now on will win an ultracool ZERO T-shirt, not to mention the amazing ego-boost, fan mail and offers of programming work that naturally follow after appearing in a mag such as this. So get movin', send your bits to Jon North, IYHL, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.

STOP

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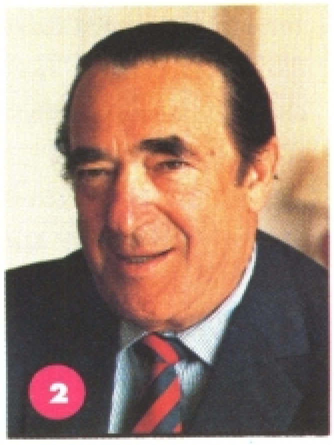
COMPO



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THE LOOT

No, funnily enough it's not a mirage. Yep, hard to believe we know but along with Mirrorsoft, we are offering you the chance to get your mits on an instant collection of 20 of the classic games of the '80s.

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THE 'COMPO' BIT

All you have to do to scoop the loot is examine the three pictures above and identify the 'mirror' connection for each one. So, for example, if you think that the chappie in picture one is famous for saying 'Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?', then write 'B' after the number one. S'easy peasy innit?

A. Never without one, however sticky the moment.
B. Says 'Mirror mirror, on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?' with profound regularity when feeling depressed and unloved.
C. Robert 'Bob' Maxwell, proprietor of the Daily Mirror.

THE 'STAMP' BIT

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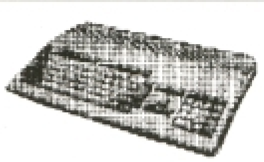
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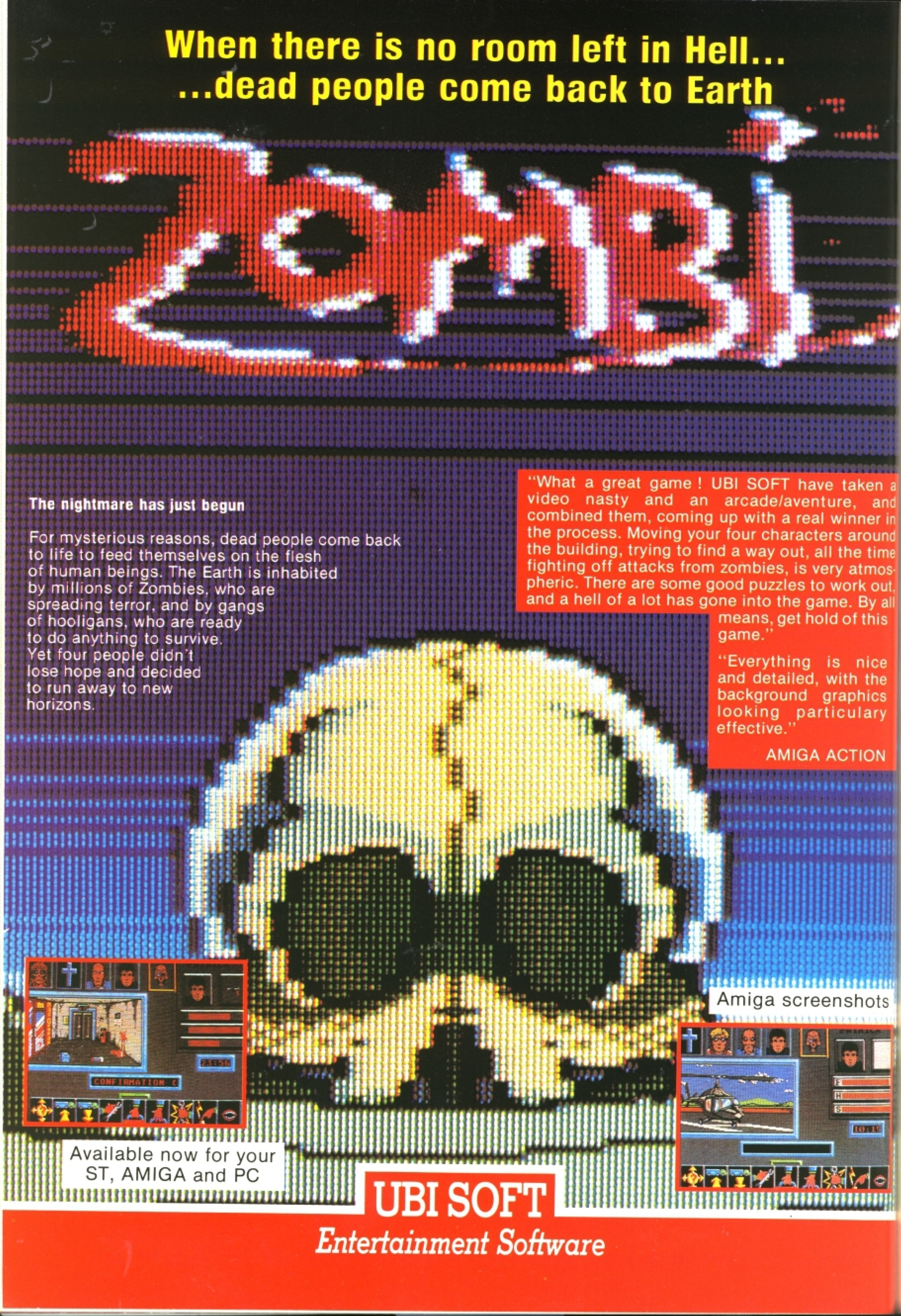
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ADVENTURES



***Mike Gerrard*, the man with the incredible growing beard and 18" flares, dived through the doorway. Cut throat razor between his teeth, he reached for the jewel in the gargoyle's mouth. Placing a small cardboard box in its place, he stood up and smiled enigmatically at the security camera. And all because the lady loves adventure games...**

It's a well known fact that the brand new and terribly secret game from Magnetic Scrolls will be out in March. So I popped along to see Anita Sinclair and although she was pretty cagey to say the least, she did admit that it wouldn't be released till June. And she should know, being the boss cat:

"I run the company in a very loose kind of a way though. We do have meetings to discuss things and if I have an idea for something but other people don't like it, then we don't do it. Someone has to give directions but it's a very family atmosphere."

Magnetic Scrolls certainly seem to have survived happily for over five years now and most people must like it – half of the staff have been working there since day one. Cripes!

HACK HUNT

"We're looking for hackers at the moment," Anita explains, "young people who know about machine code. I don't like taking people on who've worked elsewhere because they tend to have strong ideas about how things should work and we work in a unique way. We have our own development system, we've written all our own code; but I will always talk to young programmers. We're *not* looking for games ideas but I will also always talk to graphics artists; if they're good we'll take them on and we pay very well."

The company has already taken on extra staff, including graphics people, to work on the new game which has been under development now for almost three years. It's currently occupying about 13 staff and, as people have finished their work on the last few Scrolls projects (*Corruption*, *Fish!* and *Myth*), they have moved over to the new game – although the actual adventure system is being written alongside the game itself. So what stage is each at?

"The game itself is pretty much finished," Anita tells me, "and the system is about 90 per cent finished. We hope to have it all complete some time in January with versions that we consider masters by about March. But it won't be released till June. It'll undergo a lot of testing. It's got to be perfect. So right now, although we're only actively working on the one game, we are in effect actively working on five games since 90 per cent of what we're doing on this one will be relevant to the games in the pipeline as well, because it's mostly the new system we're dealing with and getting right."

But what I wanted to glean was all the hot off the press info about the current game so I wasted no time beating around the bush. The title?

"Can't say."

Er... Is it recognisably an adventure?

"It *is* recognisably an adventure, but like no adventure you've ever seen."

Um... Let's think. Is Magnetic Scrolls going the way of Infocom and Level 9 and saying goodbye to text adventures?

"Absolutely not. Magnetic Scrolls isn't saying goodbye to text. Our new game's got more words on the screen than you'll find in the average Charles Dickens novel. It's got something like 70,000 words in there. It's not a graphics game, it's a text game, but it's a text game where we've grabbed the interface and said goodbye to typing and goodbye to stationary graphics. When you see our next product your eyes are going to pop out. There are about 90 pictures in it of which 30 are very large and very animated... and 60 are not so large and not so animated!"

Among the artists that have been working on the graphics are Alan Honeysett, who did the *Corruption* graphics and Geoff Quilley, the brilliant artist who came to prominence with his stunning pictures for *The Pawn* and who has worked on most of Scrolls' games since then. The text has been put together by David Bishop, the games designer and computer journalist who presented his original design to Anita in the early part of 1987.



Blimey! Even the dog's gagged.

"It was a design for a normal text adventure that we found very exciting," Anita says. "When I saw it I went tingly all over, it was *that* good, and very few things have done that to me. (*Lordy! Ed.*) It was about that time that I'd been thinking about the future and where we should be going, and we decided to use David's design as the basis for a phenomenal game that we knew we could produce. We could have turned his game out two years ago on our old



Anita masterfully hides the game from our man (with a beard) on the scene.

system and it would still have been a pretty damn good adventure but we wanted to wait and get it on the new system and really go for it."

The new system came about because the Magnetic Scrolls team decided they ought to be producing the next generation of adventures. They spent a lot of time asking people what they really wanted and what they definitely didn't want from adventure games. The most common comments were: we want animation, we don't like using the keyboard, we want to click on the graphics and access an object, we want on-line help, we want a notebook facility. About the only features that weren't included were rather unrealistic ones, such as being able to do anything to any object in the picture – text may be able to cope with outlandish things like TELL THE BULL TO EAT THE MAILBOX but it's hard to code graphics for every possible bizarre request.

We're beginning to be able to piece together some idea of what the new game might look like. *(Erm... maybe I'm just being stupid. Ed.)* The publishers have liked what they've seen; Virgin had to fight off a few other people who were also keen on the game. It was a fortunate coincidence for Magnetic Scrolls that they had a new game to show to potential publishers when their previous publishers, Rainbird, were taken over by MicroProse.

"I knew that *Fish!* was going to be the last game on our old system," Anita admits, "I knew that ages ago. But I didn't know it would turn out to be the last game through Rainbird! That Rainbird thing almost destroyed us, nearly put us out of business. The collapse was horrendous. You're running a business, large staff, very high monthly outgoings and suddenly you've got no income. Terrific! It certainly helped that we had the new game to show to potential publishers, and their reaction has been extraordinary. That was a real booster. You know you've cracked it when you've got publishers knocking on your door instead of you having to knock on theirs."

SCROLLING SECRETS

The deal with Virgin will see the new game published on a Magnetic Scrolls label, with the older games being made available again by the end of the year but not before. Anita was reluctant to say anything about this, so it sounds like something special is being planned – a Greatest Hits collection, or budget prices maybe? Meanwhile there are still a few copies on shop shelves but everything from *Pawn* to *Fish!* is now hard to get hold of. However, Anita pointed out that former Rainbird boss Tony Rainbird had bought up large stocks of all the Scrolls' adventures for his Special Reserve club and anyone wanting a specific title is recommended to try there. However, Magnetic Scrolls aim to have three new games ready to come out in early 1991.

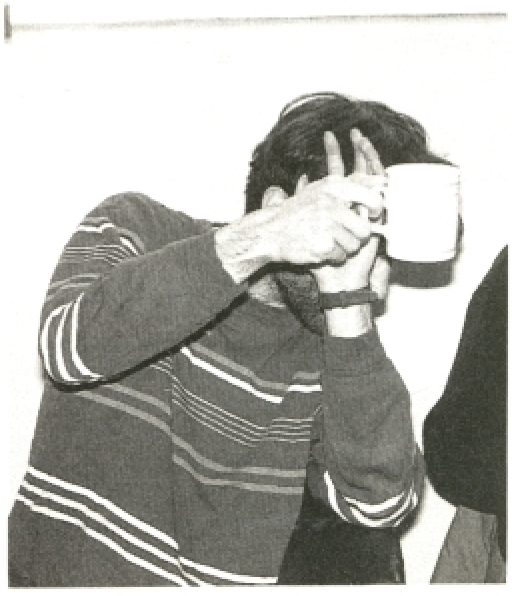
"One will be another adventure but a very different sort from anything we've done before. The other two are quite different again from that.

One has role-playing in it; we're working on RPG possibilities. I like the idea of having an infinite game. By that I mean it'll be self-generating, so if you like – and this is all hypothetical, of course – you could have at the core of the game a city inside of which things are pre-determined and there are puzzles to solve; but around the city you could have waste land where all sorts of monsters breed – and they do literally breed other monsters out there which we don't necessarily know about. You could go out into the waste land and that could go on forever, it could generate a whole new universe. You could possibly take off into another solar system, who knows? There would be a solution to the city part of it, with its pre-defined puzzles, but not for the outside part of it. The obstacles out there will be the monsters and whatever they decide to do. They may gang up against each other, they may gang up against you. It's a most extraordinary piece of code, as you can imagine."

And all hypothetical, of course. Back down to earth, other facts that came to light about the June release were that in terms of puzzle content it'll be twice as big as *The Pawn* and in overall size it will range from about 1.3 megabytes for Amiga and ST versions to a whopping 2.7 megabytes for the PC. This does help explain why there won't be 8-bit versions! The game even needs to call on a minimum of 512K internal memory to run. The only other conversions will be for the Archimedes and the Macintosh. All will be out at about the same time, except for the Mac version which will have to be later.

"But I am under instructions," admits Anita, "not to tell you very much about the first game." *(Crikey, we'd never have guessed. Ed.)*

Although the content of the storyline is still a well-kept secret and we'll have to wait until March for sneak previews, I'm sure it's going to be a game well worth holding our breath for.



No, please! I'd promised not to talk.



CLUES-EAU

LEISURE-SUIT LARRY II

Last month I gave you the dirty low-down info on that pretty dirty low-down game featuring Leisure-Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards. The follow-up has had a bit of a clean-up, and isn't nearly as filthy. *(Ah, shame. Ed.)* Unfortunately the same goes for the solution which we're bringing you this ish. But as usual, be warned that if you don't want to read it, then don't... erm, read it. And remember to save your game at least at the end of every paragraph if you want to go all the way, so to speak...

ZERO COMPLETE SOLUTION

ADVENTURE HEALTH WARNING: Reading the following may seriously damage your adventure fun – unless you're completely crap anyway.

Go into the garage for a quick buck, then map your way round the town. Go to the Mart, buy a ticket and type in the numbers. Go to the TV studio, show your ticket and write down the numbers the receptionist gives you. Then give them back to her (boy is she dumb) and sit on the bench till someone appears and takes you into the studio. This bit plays itself, so join in till you eventually leave the studio.

Go to Molto Lira and buy a cossie, go west-south-south and search the bin till you find your passport. Go get your hair cut. Go to Swabs and get some sunscreen. Go to the Mart and get a soda. Go to the music shop and chat up the girl who should be outside, then go to the saloon and say 'no' to the man before heading for the harbour, flashing your ticket and boarding the boat.

Map out the ship, then go to the barbers, then to the nightclub. Get the dip (and I don't mean in the pool), pay a visit to the lifeboat, go to the cabin on the lowest deck, open the door from the other room, leave the room, close the door and get the fruit. Wear your cossie then go to the pool, cover yourself with sunscreen and sit around till a woman appears.

You shouldn't go with her, but you can just to see what happens as long as you've saved your game first. Instead, go into the pool, dive and get the bikini. Get out again quickly, cover yourself with sunscreen once more and sit down until a woman appears. Ignore this one as well. Go back to your cabin, wear your suit and open the door from the other room and save your game NOW!

Go into the room, open the nightstand (*Do what? Ed.*), get the sewing kit, leave that room, close the door behind you and leave the other room. Now go to the bridge and, without letting the captain see you, move the switch on the right-hand side then quickly run to the lifeboat and jump in. As soon as the lifeboat hits the water you must wear the wig, rub in some more sunscreen, eat the dip, then wait 10 days till you're on the beach.

If you head east you can have some fun but be sure you've saved your game first as you'll need to restore it – yes, fun in the fatal manner. Instead go south into the vegetation and get a flower. Find a gap in the vegetation and go to the restaurant, talk to the man, sit yourself down, get the knife at the buffet, leave the place, find a gap again which this time takes you to an empty guest room where you get some soap and some matches. Leave here and go to the barbers where you sit down. Make sure you sit the right way up, 'cos sitting upside-down in a barber's chair is not to be recommended.

After leaving here you should wait, then go west to the nuddy beach, get the bikini bottom, head east and south, wait, leave the restaurant, wait again then go to the guest room. Go to the dressing area near the window, wear the bikini (mmm, nice), put your money in the bikini, leave, wait, sit down in the barbers again. Leave the barbers and wait, then go east till you can change clothes at the end of the cliff, drop the flowers for the men by the door and enter the aeroporto.

Go west then north and sit down outside the barbers, but when the woman appears don't go with her. Go east twice, hand over your passport, east again, get the baggage until you find a bomb. After the explosion buy a ticket, go east, show your passport again, go east and east again, look around and read the sign. Order a blue plate special and when you get it you can get the pin – though you should eat the food first to discover the pin. Look at the machine, get the parachute, go north, take the pamphlet, give the ticket and go east.

Once you have sat down, get the bag then give the pamphlet to the man. Stand up, go east, wear the parachute, use the pin on the right-hand side of the screen, push the handle and open the door. It might then be a wise move to open the parachute. Use the knife, look at the ground, get the stick, crawl under the bushes, go south, use the stick near the anaconda, go east and look. Watch how the monkey walks and walk over the strange pattern.

This takes you to the east, but you can also walk through the water provided you've saved your game first. Watch the screen after you've first swung a vine, then swing the next vine and so on. You should swing a vine three times, then release the vine, get the vine, go east and wait while you read the messages. Go south from the rock, then east, get the ash, go back to the rock (avoiding the edge), throw the vine in the tree, go north, throw the ash at the ice, go north, put the bag in the rejuvenator, light it, throw the bottle in the volcano, enter the elevator and sit back and watch the very long end sequence – for once, one that's more than just a token gesture.

SQUEEZY TIPS

Next month on *Blue Michael*, we'll be showing you how to make your own adventure generator using a squeezy bottle and seven square metres of sticky back plastic. Meantime, keep those letters and flea collars for Jack the cat coming in. Oh and hints, tips, cheats and other lovely revelations about your favourite adventures. Write to The Man With The Beard And A Collection Of Childrens' TV Show Memorabilia, Adventures, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Bye-bye! See you!

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THE READERS' PAGES

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Yikes! would like to draw your attention to something extremely important spotted in the book of prophecies by Nostradamus. Here's the listing that excited us so much:

"1990, and the quality of sound will become easier on the ear. The King with three names shall be delivered from his throne, after four uneasy years".

'What on earth was he going on about?' we hear you scream. Well, we'll translate it for you: *The King With Three Names* is the nub here. Who could he have been thinking of? We got an expert on the blower and were told that Nostradamus was actually refering to Stock, Aitken and Waterman. Three names. Crikey! So with that sorted, we were able to piece the rest of the thing together and what it basically ends up saying is this: *"In the year 1990, Stock, Aitken and Waterman are finally going to 'go down the dumper.'"*

Hooorah! Anyway, we thought that this fantastic piece of news deserved a 'little' bit of coverage; so Yikes! this month has a 'special' featuring a breakdown of the stars hatched by this multi-talented production team and an in-depth interview with Pete Waterman, its most vocal member.

HIGHEST JOYSTICK IN THE WORLD



Joe Farthing, from Dorking in Surrey, wrote to tell us that he'd taken his Quickjoy III to Paris with him over the Christmas period with the express purpose of snapping it at the top of the Eiffel Tower. However, disaster struck. He got up to the 'first storey' (the bit with the giant hole in the middle of the floor) and balanced the joystick on the railings. The intention was to get pictures from the different levels of the Tower, but as he was 'framing up' the shot, a gust of wind caught the stick and sent it hurtling down to terra firma. He's pleaded with us to believe him, but you all know the rules – no photographic evidence, no prize. Better luck next time, Joe.

★STAR FACT FILE★

THIS MONTH: STOCK, AITKEN AND WATERMAN

Stock, Aitken and Waterman have been instrumental in bringing us numerous 'stars'. In fact it's said that they have a 'stable', but this isn't really so: what they actually have is a galaxy. A vibrant and colourful galaxy. A galaxy of talent, wonder, diversity and personality. A galaxy stuffed so full of stars that it promises to fold in on itself and turn into a black hole (which is what Nostradamus seems to be predicting). So, before it does disappear, let's take one last look...



Kylie Minogue: the big one. Well, actually she's only about two foot five. Gorgeous Kylie has appeared in all sorts of crap Australian soaps – from humble beginnings in *The Henderson Kids* to a plum part in *Neighbours*. However, Australians absolutely hated *Neighbours* so it didn't look as if mega-stardom was on the cards for poor Kylie – until the programme took off over here in Blighty, that is. Suddenly 400 trillion people knew who she was. She was a diminuitive, plucky and rather tasty 'sheila' who could flutter her eyelids and wear a pretty dress. And she could mend a car as well. She was Charlene Ramsay of Ramsay Street. Hoorah! Her adventures and exploits had the nation on the edge of its collective seat as, every day – just before the six o'clock news – something 'unexpected' happened to her. And then, all of a sudden, she made a single which zoomed up the charts to number one. And then she released another single. And then another. And then another. Kylie was definitely here to stay and it was all thanks to Stock, Aitken and Waterman. Hooray!



Jason Donovan played Scott Robinson in *Neighbours* – he was married to Charlene Ramsay. Unfortunately, because Charlene had become famous as a 'popstrel' in England, Scott now didn't seem to spend any time with her on screen. One moment they were a happy couple, sharing each others lives and the next, Scott was as good as single again. He wasn't very pleased by this (and who can blame him?), but he didn't really know what to do. He could have a bash at becoming a pop star as well but there was one major problem – he couldn't sing for toffee. He couldn't dance, either. "It doesn't matter," said Pete Waterman when this subject was broached over the telephone, "neither can Kylie." And so, spookily, Scott Robinson started appearing less regularly in Ramsay Street, just like Charlene. He was as busy as a bee elswhere, you see – in the British pop charts. He was back with Kylie again. And it was thanks to Messrs Stock, Aitken and Waterman. Hip hooray!



Sinitta never appeared in *Neighbours*, which was a bad move on her part. However, to her credit, she did once appear in the West End stage production of *Mutiny On The Bounty* with David Essex. Not quite the 'draw' of *Neighbours*, admittedly, but better than being in *Mother Goose* on Worthing pier with Christopher Biggins as co-star. Anyway, there was something else in Sinitta's favour – it was a quality much admired by Mr Stock, Mr Aitken and Mr Waterman – it was a quality that Jason Donovan had in





abundance: it was the ability to be not very good at both singing and dancing. And so Sinitta was thrust onto an unsuspecting public. With her shrill voice, muscley legs and 'stimulating' dance routines, the music charts had never had it so good.

The Reynolds Girls. Ah, what memories. What lovely, bubbly little creations these girls were. They were plucked from total obscurity, and given a song (in which they announced to the record buying public that they would rather 'Jack' than 'Fleetwood Mac'). It looked like a 'from rags to riches' story was on the cards for the buxom belles, until they made a silly mistake... they got a little bit too big for their boots. "We're the new Beatles," they proudly proclaimed, "except there's only two of us and we're not blokes." Stock, Aitken and Waterman decided that maybe, just possibly, they might have made a teensy weensy little 'mistake' with this particular experiment. And so, unfortunately, the unit known as The Reynolds Girls was quickly and quietly 'closed down'.



Sonia emerged. She was both of the Reynolds Girls rolled into one: but she'd been programmed more effectively. "Don't forget who butters your bread," she'd been reminded by Pete Waterman, and so she didn't forget – every time she was interviewed she would mention 'Pete' the regulation 18 times. "Oh, Pete's absolutely brilliant," she would enthuse, relating for the 50th time the story of how she approached him at a Hitman And Her party (and sang him a song). "He thought it was brilliant," she chuckled, "but I just thought he was even more brilliant. I wouldn't be here without Stock, Aitken and Waterman." Indeed she wouldn't. Hurrah!



Bananarama. They're in the record books: the most successful all girl singing trio anywhere in the entire history of the world. It's a fact, and it's all thanks to Stock, Aitken and Waterman who rather 'coined it', as they say. Everyone concerned made loads of money. Yes, the girls have certainly come a long way since their humble beginnings with Fun Boy 3... but where are they at the moment though? Everyone thought that when Siobhan left, she could simply be replaced and things would carry on much as before – but it doesn't seem to have worked quite as smoothly as that. Luckily for the 'Rams though, the Japanese don't seem to have twigged that one of the girls has been changed. So that's where Bananarama are now – happily gigging in Japan.

Big Fun. That's what you would get if you gave all three members of Bananarama a sex-change operation. What a brilliant idea. You don't just get one or two people who can't sing or dance together, you get three. Just like the 'Rams, but blokes. All you do is give them a fairly simple dance routine and once they've learnt it they can do it again and again – on all of their videos. And it worked like a dream: "Don't blame it on the sunshine, don't blame it on the moonlight, don't blame it on the ****, blame it on Stock, Aitken and Waterman:" Another cheer for the lads – if Nostradamus is right, they'll be sadly missed. Hip hip, hooray!



★ DEREK, NIGEL, JONATHAN AND ALAN ★



Here are four lads who hope that Nostradamus has cocked up again. Plucked by Pete Waterman from a pub in Devon, they're now learning some dance steps and having a cover version especially written for them. The group is called *Derek, Nigel, Jonathan and Alan*. Yikes had a word...

Derek: Well, we was just sitting there drinkin' scrumpi an' 'avin a sing song...
Nigel: That's roight – an' then suddenly this bloke comes up to us and says do we want to make some money?
Jonathan: An' Alan says "'Ere, ain't you that Stock, Aitken an' Waterman bloke?"
Alan: That's roight – an' he just looks back at me an' says "Yeah, that's me, all roight. Oi'm Pete Waterman"...
Derek: Except 'e didn't say it quoit like that, 'cus he's got a London accent, see?
Nigel: That's roight. But 'e signs us up on the spot. We're 'avin a special song wrote for us, an' we're 'avin danssin' lessons. We're goin' on *Top Of The Pops*.
Alan: Yup. The lads on the farm are roight jealous, oi can tell you...
(That's enough about Derek, Nigel, Jonathan And Alan. Ed.)

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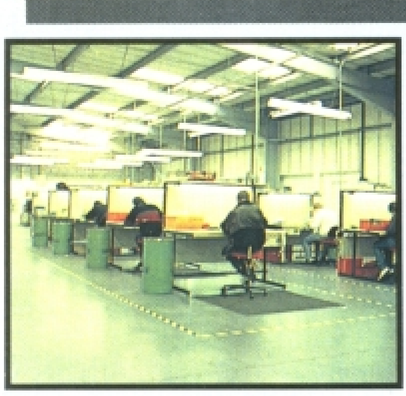
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SYNCHRO

BUILDING TIPS

by ROBERT McALPINE JUNIOR

Hello there. Apparently there's not a lot of space this month, so I've been asked to keep things short. Actually, this suits me down to the ground as I'm having a few problems at the moment – legal problems. I've got some legal people breathing down my neck about a garden wall I built three years ago – and I could be in quite a bit of trouble if my lawyers can't come up with a good counter attack. Here's the problem...
When I build a wall, as you'll know if you're a regular reader, I tend to pay a lot of attention to the foundations. I believe in going down deep. If you want a wall to last you have to make sure it's unmovable, after all. Well, on this job three years ago, I really went to town. I hired quite a bit of expensive equipment and took the foundations to 200 feet below sea level. I made them wide, too – much wider than the actual wall itself.

Also, as well as using brick, I strengthened the whole structure with concrete and steel mesh. The trouble is that the person I did the job for sold his house last year and the site was earmarked for office-block development. And guess what's stopping the offices going up? That's right: my wall. The foundations are stopping the electricity, water and gas pipes from being laid. The extra manpower and plant needed is going to cost the construction company concerned an extra £80,000. And the contractors are trying to get the money off me. You see my dilemma? I'll keep you posted as things develop, but before I go for this month, there's just room for a letter from Stewart Lawrence-Smith of Notting Hill in London. He's been kind enough to share a gardening tip with us.

Dear Robert
This isn't quite a building or demolition tip, but I feel it's pretty close. It's a gardening tip – a tip on weeding, to be precise. Here it is: when pulling up stinging nettles I find it's worth, using a pair of tweezers, pulling out each individual 'stinging hair' from the stems (and from underneath each of the leaves). Although it takes ages, once you've finished the job, there's no danger of getting stung when you bung everything in bin-liners.

Well, that's quite clever. Up until now I've been wearing one of those old-fashioned diving suits (and the helmet), but I'll certainly give your method a go when Summer comes around. And don't forget – there's a prize waiting for anyone whose tips I use, so write in. See you next month (if I'm not in prison, that is).

NOSTRADAMUS ALSO PREDICTS...

We've got our 'expert' back on the dog and bone to check out and 'translate' some other Nostradamus predictions. We then, er, translated the translation.

Nostradamus: 1990 will find a threefold birth. Where, I cannot say, but a miracle has occured. Many will witness the event.

Translation: In 1990, someone very famous will give birth to three children. But it will be a surprise birth in some way.

Our translation: Gail has triplets in *Neighbours*.

Nostradamus: He is a man whose smile can kill at a merry pace – it is a crooked mark, to be sure. But this is the dawning of a new age – and the smile shall be forcibly removed. The hollow laugh of the Tyrant shall sound no longer.

Translation: Dawning of a new age means the year 2000 or thereabouts. And we've got a man who is insincere in some way. He'll be overthrown.

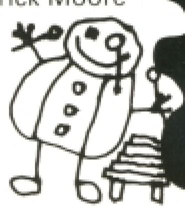
Our translation: Jonathan King will be asassinated.

ASTRONOMY CORNER

by Professor Bernard Nebula



So obviously Stock, Aitken and Waterman are more important than me, as I've been told to keep this short. Okay then, you'll just have to wait a whole month to find out the staggering news I've just been told by Heather Couper, won't you? In fact I may even decide not to impart what I know at all. Oh alright, I'll give you a clue: I can't keep it to myself. It's got something to do with Patrick Moore and Claire Rayner(!). There, that's all I can say for now. Honestly – Stock, Aitken and Waterman. I mean to say... who cares? Who are *they*? Anyway, see you next month.



BLACK SHAPE

(The Alternative Letters Page)

Oh dear. Because of the Stock, Aitken and Waterman revelation, I'm afraid that I'm all sort of tiny and microscopic this month – picoscopic, in fact! So there's only really room for one letter. Here it is... 'B'. Ho ho ho. No, that wasn't it actually, I was just being facetious – here's the real one, but I warn you in advance that it's from Poland...

Dear Shape
My name is Josef and I am a collection of FIRST issues of newspapers or magazines. It would be very happy to recieve – free from charge, you understand – many of, or even if only several, your catalogue for Amiga, ST and consoles, ZERO. Send also, several games for Amiga. You might guess that I have Amiga, but it is not. My friend is the one. Maybe I sell him?
Josef, Lodz, Poland.

● (In loud staggered bursts reserved for old people and foreigners) *You – want – me – to – send – you – many – things, – my – friend! Fair – enough, – but – I – don't – see – any – dosh! I – don't – do – things – 'free – from – charge'. Hit – me – with – the – sound – of – some – 'jingly – janglies' – and – you – might – have – a – bit – more – luck! (I – accept – any – currency: – even – your – Zloty's – and – Groszy's).*
Black Shape.

THE yikes! INTERVIEW

PETE WATERMAN

Every month, Yikes! gets on the blower and talks to an 'extremely famous mega-celebrity'. Um, who could we do this month? Well actually, the choice was obvious: i.e. the mouthpiece of Stock, Aitken and Waterman – namely Pete Waterman. So we got out our phonebook and contacted Mrs Mabel Poopdeck of Plaistow, who gave us the telephone number of Pete Waterman's personal assistant, Sue. (You have to get through Sue before you can speak to Pete, you see.) Anyway, here's what happened...



Yikes!: Hello. Put us through to Pete Waterman, will you please?
Sue: I'm sorry but I'm afraid you've missed him. He's gone to Japan.
Yikes!: Erm. Er, um. We, er... Oh. Did you say Japan?
Sue: Yes. He won't be back for a month.
Yikes!: Oh, dear! Okay, thanks Sue. Bye.

So, this was destined to become the shortest Yikes! interview to date – as there wasn't enough time left to arrange another one. But, seeing as we had all the questions ready it seemed a shame to waste them so we decided to go ahead and answer them ourselves (in the way Pete Waterman probably would have). So here we go – the Pete Waterman interview... (tan tara).

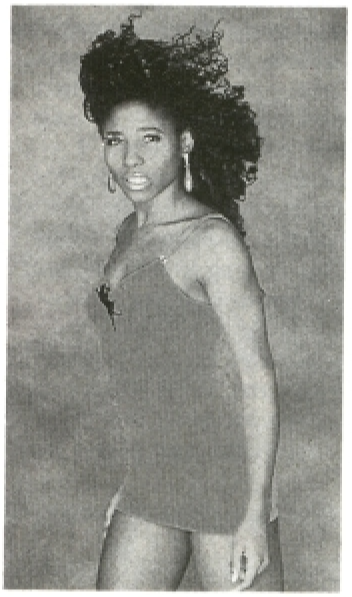
Yikes!: Hello Pete. Um did you know that Nostradamus has predicted that you're going to go down the dumper this year?
Pete: Yes, I did actually.
Yikes!: Eh? Oh. You weren't really supposed to say that.
Pete: Well what on earth was I supposed to say then?
Yikes!: Erm, well, "no" basically. Um, well anyway, so what do you think of his prediction then?
Pete: Not a lot , really.
Yikes!: You're not worried then?
Pete: No. He's not exactly renowned for his blinding accuracy, is he?
Yikes!: Well, he got the Falklands war right. And Mark Thatcher getting lost in the desert.
Pete: No he didn't.
Yikes!: Yes he did.
Pete: No he didn't.
Yikes!: Yes he did. Um, about Big Fun. Erm, we don't quite know how to put this, but "why"???
Pete: I just wanted to prove that three total gimps who couldn't dance or sing could make it into the charts if they had the right songs and the right backing.

Um, about Big Fun... "why"???

Yikes!: But surely you did that with Bananarama?
Pete: Yes, but they were girls. I wanted to prove that you could do it with blokes as well.
Yikes!: Explain the Reynolds girls.
Pete: No. I don't want to talk about them.
Yikes!: Fair enough. Kylie Minogue then. Um, did she approach you originally or was it the other way around?

Those Bros boys are like that, you know.

Pete: She actually approached me in the first place. It was years ago. Funnily enough, I told her to bog off to begin with, but then somebody told me she was in *Neighbours*, so I phoned her up and told her to come back.
Yikes!: Is it true that during the filming of the *Do They Know It's Christmas?* video, Luke Goss cracked one of the blokes from The Pasadenas across the back of the head with his drum stool?



Pete: Yes. I'm quite surprised you got to hear about that: he actually knocked him out cold, as it happens. Mind you, those Bros boys are like that, you know. Any chance of a bit of aggro and they'll wade in with arms flailing. They're the most violent twins in pop.
Yikes!: Are there any other stories of violence behind the scenes?
Pete: Yeah, loads. Sinitta for instance – talk about psycopathic behaviour. And she's quite capable of handing out bruises, believe you me. Jason Donovan once took a hiding of a lifetime, just for putting too many sugars in her coffee. Hazel Dean's another terror. So is Rick Astley. Awful.
Yikes!: Why do all your songs sound exactly the same?
Pete: Because they are the same, that's why. We just nick different melody lines from here and there and stick them on top of a standard backing track. Everyone knows that. Nobody seems to mind though and it makes our job a hell of a lot easier.
Yikes!: Is there anything you'd like to say in case Nostradamus' prediction does really come true?
Pete: Not really, no.
Yikes!: Oh. Well, thanks anyway. Bye bye.



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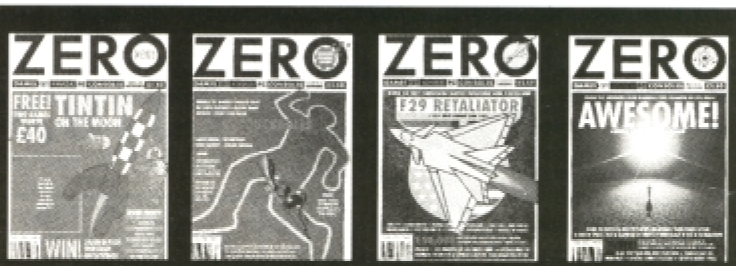
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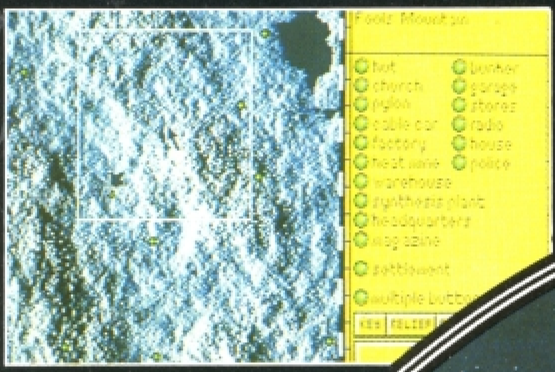
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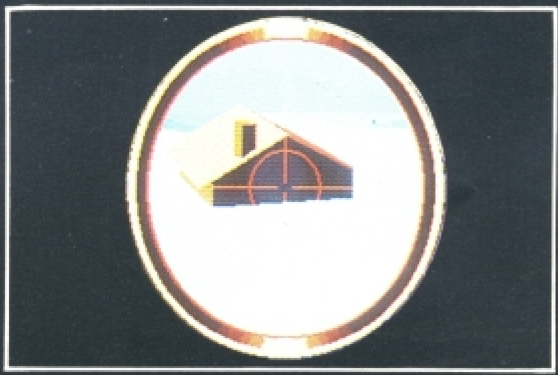


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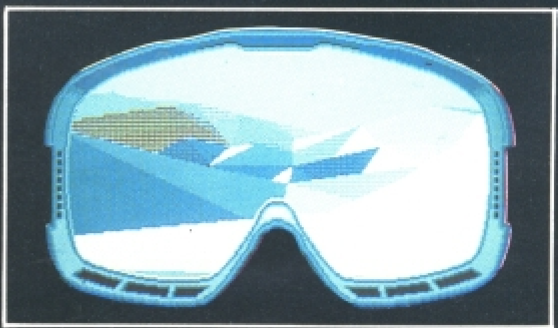
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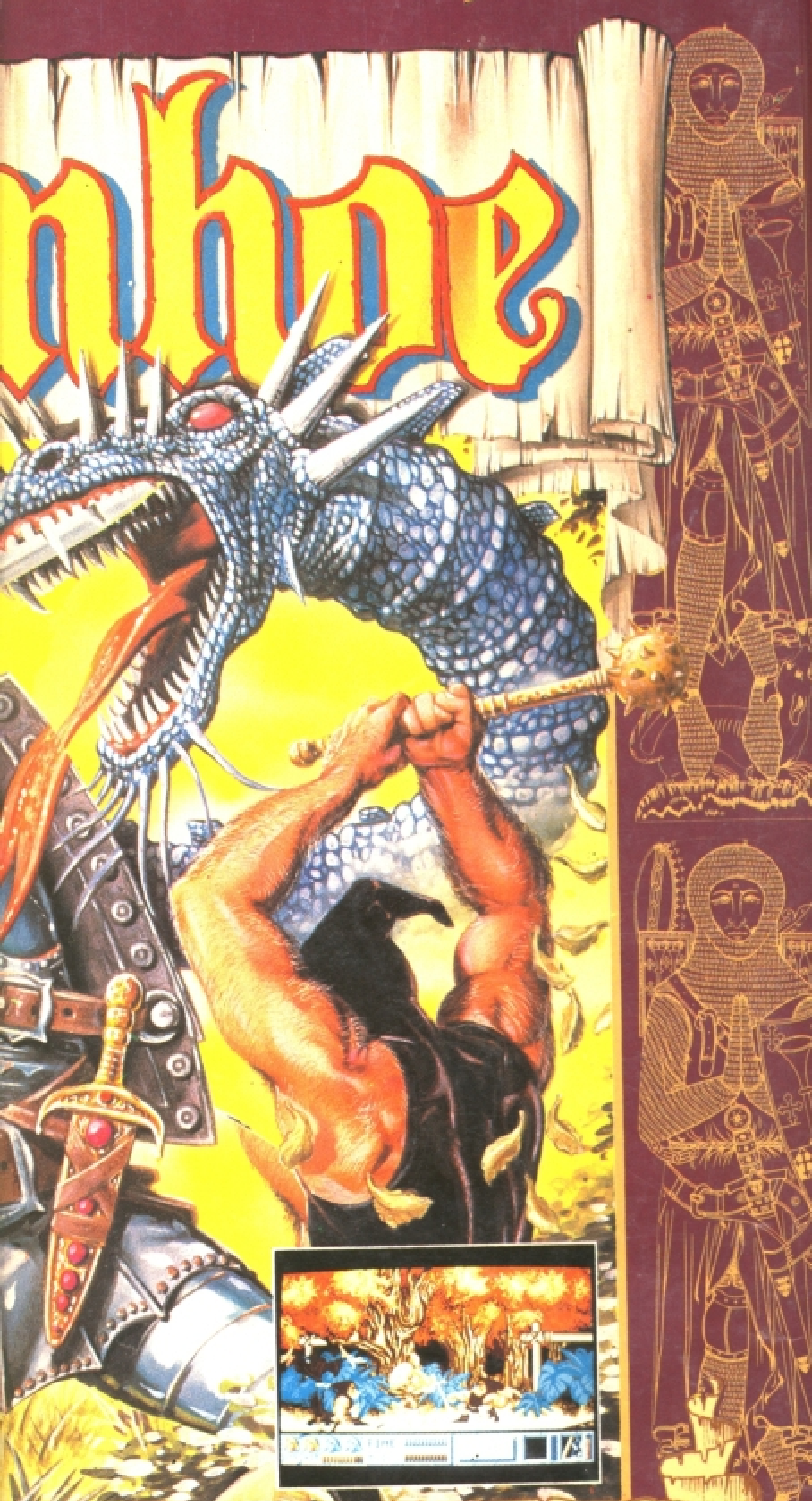
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